

art & soul

# TABLE MANNERS - 2

a celebration of ceramics and food

## TABLEWARE

AARTI MANIK

ADIL WRITER

AMRITA DHAWAN

ATELIER LALMITTI

DEVYANI SMITH

RANJITA BORA

SABRINA SRINIVAS

SARASWATI

SHAYONTI SALVI



## MURALS

ADIL WRITER

ANJANI KHANNA

ANOUSHKA IRIS

NEHA KUDCHADKAR

PANTHINI THAKER

RAHUL KUMAR

SHAYONTI SALVI

VINOD DAROZ

SHWETA MANSINGKA

# CURATORIAL STATEMENT

TABLE MANNERS – 2 opening at Gallery Art & Soul on the 24th & 25th of September 2021, will draw you into the nexus of good food and delicious ceramic ware... and hope you come out a believer!

A decade ago, I co-curated TABLE MANNERS-1 with Rakhee Kane at Gallery Square Circle in Auroville featuring artists from Pondicherry, Bangalore and Auroville. Everyone was given a cement slab tabletop on Siporex blocks, one naked bulb hanging off a dangly wire, all set in a dark cement-walled room. Images of the tables shot by Ireneo Guerci somehow reached Tarana Khubchandani of Gallery Art & Soul, who for the last decade has been requesting a “Part 2” at her space in Bombay. My only stipulation, “I want dark walls,” ...took some doing!

Now, dark walls et al, we introduce you to TABLE MANNERS – 2, this time my co-curator being the indefatigable Shayonti Salvi. We opened up the show to make it an all-India presence, inviting over 60 artists to send in proposals for table settings and wall murals. Our outline was simple; we wanted clean functional ceramics; no hairy-fairy concepts and absolutely no metaphors! For the walls we invited artists to submit proposals for murals dealing with food as the outlining theme.

We were flooded with incredibly varied and skilled ideas for filling up the tables and walls; all of which will jostle each other, happily so, to form a collage of some of the best cutting-edge ceramic work one may get to see in India today. Given pandemic constraints, we will try and set up the exhibition with pop-up events hosted by chefs and celebs in the hospitality industry, who will bounce off their ideas of food presentation, plating, etc., inspired by the tableware around them at the show.

Today in India, there is a growing awareness for the Use-in-India the Made-in-India...a healthy sign in a country so rich and young in its ceramic history! We urge you to touch some of the work, pick it up, feel the balance, feel the textures, flip it over and see the bottoms, notice the various clay bodies used by artists for their sets. It is a humdinger that functional tableware has moved away from being the humble bumpkin of sculptural ceramics and is now basking in newfound possibilities. Enjoy the handmade...and the variety of clay processes, firing techniques and signature aesthetics.

The pandemic was in its initial stages of uncertainty last year, when we decided to postpone TABLE MANNERS-2 .... just three days prior to opening night in March 2020. Then again postponed in March 2021! However, it finally opens on the 24th of September 2021. Virtual? Actual? Does it matter? .... just mind your table manners and socially distance yourself as you swoon over the works on display!!!

**ADIL WRITER, with Shayonti Salvi, September 2021**

# **TABLEWARE**





Growing up in a large, food loving, joint family, meals and everything that came were an important part of life. The brass and copper vessels used for cooking, serving and storing were a delight to behold. The forms were strong and there was a fine sense of balance both in the kitchen and on the table. For this Table Manners setting I have focused on playing with the forms of thalis, katoris, tumblers and tiffin dubbas.

I wanted to find a way to bring the concept of a tiffin dubba to a formal dining setting. Keeping that form in mind the stacked vessels came to be.

I wanted to create a functional form that would also serve as a central visual element for this setting, while keeping the other pieces minimalistic in form.

All the pieces have been left to the mercy and blessing of over 90 hours wood firing. Amen!



**AARTI MANIK**







## “MADE IN ITALY”

Faenza, Italy 2018.

I am at the ceramic bottega of the incorrigible Mirta Morigi; To the background music of five chatty girls, hard at work, oblivious to the decibel levels they were reaching, I am working with white earthenware and vibrant colorful glazes; ...outside my studio but well inside my comfort zone!

The lady of the house is freaking out saying her glazes will not work under and over each other; I ask her to chill, am enjoying the process. We load the first batch in her two small electric kilns, set the temperature gradient and go home for the night; aah! these complicated electric firings!

Next morning, we open the kiln to the tinkle of the symphony of cooling glazes. The pieces are coming out looking pretty gorgeous. A stunned but happy Mirta goes, “I want this one, I want that one.” Point proven. God is in the experimentation. I glaze and fire a few more kiln-loads before it’s time to take the flight home. What I can carry with me, I do; and hide it away in my Auroville house for two years. But one has to learn to let go of one’s pots in this business or you land up sleeping between pots.

Which I do. Table Manners - 2 seems to be the best platform to exhibit them now. Must remember that the rest of this loot I still have sitting in Faenza!



## ADIL WRITER







“QUIET TABLEWARE, FLAMBOYANT FOOD!”

Tableware that suggests repose appeals to me. For I have often found that a dish served is cluttered, rather than enhanced by the dish it is served in!

Towards crafting a contemplative calm, I present a muted, gleaming table setting: tones of sandalwood and ivory creamed in hakeme swirl and sgraffito pattern, are fluxed and fixed in a clear gloss glaze. ‘Soup & Salad’ is a meal that can be dressed up or dressed down at will. The riot of lettuce, tomato, radish, peppers, purple cabbage to mention a few ingredients of a salad, together with the relative sobriety of the soups, clear or chowder, make for a meal attractively variegated in hue and texture, served in ware that can accommodate the chameleon cook’s desire to express either the theatrical or the subtle. The soup consumed, the salad eaten, my tableware now holds food for thought - thanksgiving for the recent repast and a promise of future fulfillment.

**AMRITA DHAWAN**







Atelier Lāmitti is a clay studio located in the village of Andretta, in the heart of the Indian Himalayas, near Dharamshala. We, Élodie Alexandre and Reyaz Badruddin, a ceramic artist duo from France and India, started a small production pottery as a joint project a few years ago, where we also offer teaching programs and art residencies. The name Atelier Lāmitti reflects the diversity of our setup. Atelier is 'studio' in French, while Lāmitti translates both as 'precious clay' in Persian and 'red clay' in Hindi. Atelier Lāmitti creates ceramic tableware adorned with blue and white patterns. Working in small unique series, our work is cheerful and friendly, ideal to turn daily occasions into special moments. We believe that handmade pottery enhances everyday life and makes drinks and food taste better. Our pieces are handmade and stamped with our little cat logo before being fired a first time. After this initial 'bisque' firing, the pots are dipped in glaze. The small recess areas which can be spotted on all of our pots are the finger-grip marks which occur while dipping. We like to leave this as a feature and a trace of the hand of the maker. As with the rest of the process, it contributes to make each and every piece unique. Using brushes, we paint our designs over the glaze with cobalt oxide, after which the pots go through a second firing to 1060°C.

**ATELIER LALMITTI**





Beauty at the edge of nothingness  
Beauty that begins from or ends at it.  
Creating forms from a ball of clay is fun, working along with  
all elements is deeply intense; and somewhere between  
fun and intensity some pots come alive.

Purpose leads most of my works on the table! Work that  
has desire to be used, with added beauty and acceptance.  
I like my work to evoke ease, in form, in colours and in use.  
Every piece whole in itself and can easily be a part of a  
cluster merging in.



**DEVYANI SMITH**







## “KAHVULTI – A TURKISH BREAKFAST“

For Table Manners 2020, I've chosen the theme “Kahvulti” which refers to Turkish Breakfast. When translated it means “Before Coffee. Kahvulti is a lavish and almost decadent spread of different food items eaten together with çay (tea) before kahve (coffee). It consists of breads, eggs, cheeses, jams, honey, olives, charcuterie, fruits, vegetables... all downed with the help of freshly squeezed juices and red tea. My choice of theme is informed by my own interest and love for food having worked as a chef in a prior incarnation. As a potter the sheer diverseness of food helps fuel my imagination to create tableware that complements the spread and is a treat for the eyes and the soul. The tableware has been created keeping in mind the rich tradition of Turkey in terms of design. Each dish has been brushed with slip and hand-painted with motifs of paisley and vine that are particular to that region. All my work is handmade, high fired and food safe.



## **RANJITA BORA**







## “MATTER IN PLAY”

Table-ware has an amazing potential to transcend its primary function. A well-made tea bowl can reveal many secrets on a monsoon day. A generous bowl can offer comfort and solidarity. It is a testament of coming together, family dinner fights, and craftsmanship. Table Manners presented me with an opportunity to bring to life my explorations in painting into the four-dimensional experiential space. The dinnerware became a part of an ongoing study of Matter in Play – what is it that connects all of us? What is our purpose or role in this play of life? The visual language of particle and waves found its way on to the functional forms of table-ware. The work that resulted is a celebration of life itself, a reflection of an inexhaustible joie de vivre.



## SABRINA SRINIVAS







## “ALL THE GAME”

My pieces are very practical if you see them with the open mind. Not the same sort of practicality that the disposable plates offer. Exactly opposite – I think it's not PRACTICAL any more to eat while running, while working or while being worried of something. You need to slow down in order to be effective again. The playful unconventional things will take you away from the routine. Will you feel the same as yesterday and the day before yesterday if you stirred your coffee today with the poppy seed pod? Your world, your belongings, your utensils should maintain a warm and friendly conversation with you. That sort of laughter nobody hears but it makes your day. If they were made with love and laughter, this energy will be yours. Forever.

## SARASWATI





## “MERGING CULTURES”

Within the framework of art and architecture, we are surrounded by coherently amalgamated works, aspects of which find their origin in various cultures and history. We take their wholesomeness for granted and get so accustomed to their existence, that scarcely do we delve into the meaning behind their marriages. It is these very compositions, that reveal how we as a species adapt to the contradictions we experience in our daily lives, and begin to own them. In my current body of work with tableware, I explore the juxtaposition of cultures, traditions and techniques. Grecian forms of pottery, the starting point, invite us to celebrate the comfort their forms offer. These forms compel one to hold them and experience them in their materiality. In spite of a stark contrast, puritan Chinese white porcelain with shibori decals and precious metal decoration, all sit comfortably with each other at the table. The Japanese elements of shibori seem to marry into these forms without question. By composing a body of work that includes a variety of ceramic techniques, I hope to bring to light, the effect of self-imposed boundaries within our cultures, the promise of evaporating these geographical boundaries and the acceptance of being different communities. My fascination for this topic stems from the fact that my children are a combination of the Jewish, Maharashtrian, Punjabi and Sindhi cultures. ‘Table Manners’ is a phrase I’d like to use, while I think of sitting down at the table, with all that these cultures have to offer, and celebrate their communion by being cognizant of these differences.

**SHAYONTI SALVI**





# MURALS

## “FOOD IS MEMORIES”



Atmospheric firings like soda-firing clay, with wood as the principal fuel, is still a very niche aesthetic and firing process in India. While I have been soda-firing most of my sculptural studio ceramic work since the last few years, recently we at Mandala Pottery have introduced this feel and look to our functional tableware too, much to the appreciation of my collectors as well as the buying public at various boutiques we supply “regular” tableware to. Letting go functional forms to the idiosyncrasies of unpredictable firings is always a risk ...but extremely rewarding because one never knows what one will get as the final product. The last five years have seen an unprecedented surge in tableware orders coming to Mandala Pottery from chefs and restaurants, all wanting very specific looks & designs which we are happily catering to. For this ‘Table Manners’ show, I was very clear that I wanted a mural on the wall that would be fully functional tableware. I don’t see the point in crucifying a good piece of clay on the wall just because it is pretty. You may also bring it off the wall and use it in daily life. I will give you brownie points for that, no pun intended! Like one of the platters proclaims, “Food is Memories”. Connect with the tableware and build up your own memories too!

**ADIL WRITER**





"MORNING COFFEE"

From sleep to wakefulness  
That liminal state  
Between rest and action  
Mediated by a mug of  
Coffee.



**ANJANI KHANNA**







## “LIFE OF IRIS”

I thought of an iris, my favorite flower, from all possible points of view.

An iris as a bud and an iris at the end of its blooming.

An iris as it was pictured in medieval ornaments and nineteenth century book illustrations.

The presence of an iris and absence of it.

Sacramental or spontaneous.

In various circumstances an iris carries on its purity, strength and innocence.



## **ANOUSHKA IRIS**







## “CONTAINER”

This is a body of work that has been made using plastic food packaging that I have been collecting for the last 8 years. Manmade skin on nature made objects of delight. To be discarded easily. Manmade mountains. Immortal plastic reefs. Waiting their turn to disintegrate patiently. Shards quietly leaching into earth. Changing it forever.

**NEHA KUDCHADKAR**







Clay centers me. It is like a home coming. It has this silent strength, an ability to hold form. My wordless expression. It's yielding, malleable quality withstanding all natural forces is an inspiration to me. The purush (male) and the prakriti (female) with all their elements, help me channelize, introspect and reflect with expressions in clay - a symbol of longevity and happiness. My works are about discovering and capturing "that" fleeting moment into solid form through interplay of beauty, fragility and tranquility. Just as an ensō symbolizes movement, the fluid nature of development, of perfection with space for imperfection is an ongoing process. The swift unchangeable brushstroke evidences the brief, but continuous period of time by the creator. With this series of works, I wish my works grow on to the user to the level of joy and love. They create an ambience of belief with an exciting personality which will live and work with the onlooker who adopts them. A spiritual link, which, when received and shared with love and respect.

## **PANTHINI THAKER**





## “MEMORY KEEPERS”

I was trained as a potter when I began my journey in clay. To make a perfect bowl that is comfortable to use or a tea-pot that pours well was the only objective. Over the years, I began using my medium (clay) and subject (vessel) to express. Utility took a back seat and the concept of beauty gradually changed for me. These works use imagery that is referencing personal experiences and journeys. In the plaques, the objects used are recognizable, but may not immediately put context of the usage or application. The idea is for the viewer to build a relationship based on their own emotions. The treatment is to generate a feeling of them being tablets excavated, and thus the title -Memory Keepers. The use of calligraphic text / letters from various traditional languages to layer it with the concept of documentation. The words are not intended to convey specific meaning, and in fact, have often been distorted. Gold leaf accents bring references of preciousness. The attempt is to make them visually engaging and reveal an expression that emerges only on closer inspection and contemplation. Paradox, irony, and dichotomy are all at play in these works.



## RAHUL KUMAR





## “CHEESY KOI”

My heart's escape is the ocean. Having witnessed some of its many wonders while scuba diving, I am intrigued by the fluidity of forms and textures seen underwater. They create the illusion of being in constant motion even though they may be perfectly still pieces of coral or shell. To bring that movement into my work is an on-going self-inflicted challenge. This koi fish mural is a transformation from table to wall. Honest confession! I have been obsessed with cheese ever since I can remember. It is no surprise then, that this obsession translates to cheese platters, which I have been making with a vengeance over the past few years. With the number of local cheese makers that have mushroomed up across the country, the number of cheese connoisseurs have too. Joyous times, indeed! My platters are very organic in form. They convey the process used to create them through their undulated amoebic shapes. Each one is unique and different; in that they are sprayed individually with glazes and sgraffito-ed with oceanic sketches that suit my fancy. This mural is made up of thirty-five cheese platters each unlike the other, their binding element being the giant koi fish they attempt to contain.



## SHAYONTI SALVI





## “Persephone’s Fruit – The Pomegranate”



Using clay as a medium I try to express what has moved me deeply or left an impact on my journey through life. My work responds to ideologies or philosophies that prod me to introspect, mulling deeper, pushing me gently to explore the multifaceted layers under the water - washed landscape of life and living. Working in the serene privacy of my studio space integrates clay into my life, playing a vital part in my spiritual quest. For this show Table Manners 2 I have used porcelain pears as my form because fruits inspire me with their symbolism of abundance and their constantly evolving life cycle. Food is not only something that provides nutrition to nourish our body but also something that nurtures our mind and thoughts. The ripeness of a fruit is not an end, rather it is the mature belly, nurturing fresh seeds as potential to perpetuate life. A fruit in all its maturity embodies the very womb of creation. I have used gold plated stems symbolic of the umbilical cord... the life force connecting to the universal tree of life. Using fruit as the form in a mural, I hope to remind the viewer to feel gratitude and wonder at the magnanimity of nature, for constantly providing us with food and resources. As we sit down for our next meal at our humble table, may we all value and savour the food that nourishes us as nature's unconditional and abundant gift.

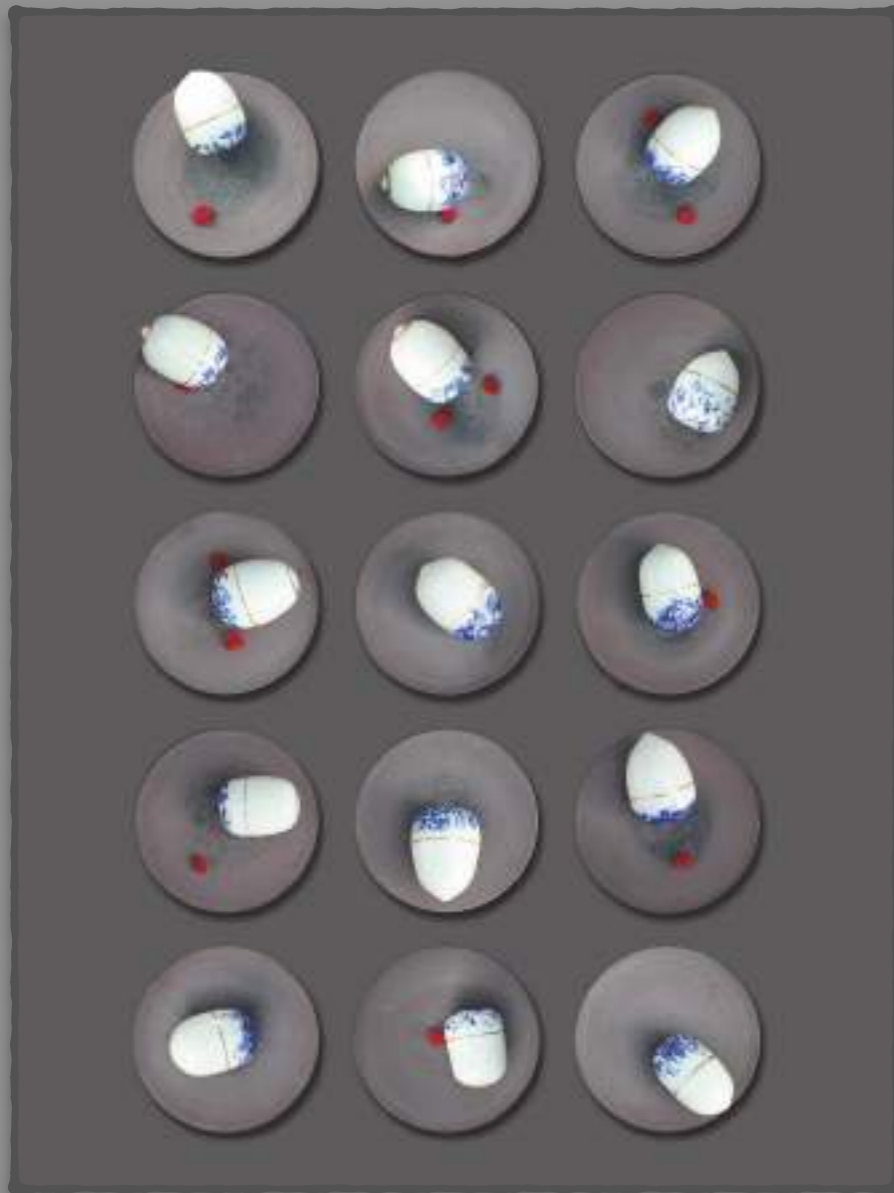
**SHWETA MANSINGKA**





## “SAMUDRA MANTHAN”

The work uses mundane forms rooted in the Indian tradition. Pestle and mortar is found in many traditional Indian households. A tool used for preparing food for sustenance. The work uses the form of a pestle as a symbol of creation. The correspondence of Samudra Manthan from the Bhagavata Purana leading to Amrita (nectar of immortality) can be seen as an interesting parallel in relation to the work. The story entailing the coming into being of beautiful things along with gods and goddesses known as Ratnas. The floral motifs in the work signals toward fertility and abundance, and the creation of beautiful things. The choice of materials and techniques in the works are used to enhance the act of creation. The use of porcelain is known for its rich colourful glaze and patterns, but the translucency and strength of porcelain is highlighted, reflecting the ethereal, mystical and spiritual aspect of creation. The use of rich gold and Persian blue resonates the Oriental motifs and infusing technique of decal the works exhibit the modern practise of studio ceramic.



## VINOD DAROZ





art & soul  
**TABLE MANNERS - 2**  
a celebration of ceramics and food

PREVIEW: 24<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> September 2021, 12pm to 7 pm

EXHIBIT CONTINUES TILL 6<sup>th</sup> November 2021

GALLERY TIMINGS: Monday – Saturday 10am – 7:30 pm

Sundays by appointment only

curated by

**ADIL WRITER & SHAYONTI SALVI**

masks to be worn at all times | kindly maintain social distancing | please mind your table manners!

ART & SOUL, 11, MADHULI, SHIVSAGAR ESTATE, WORLI, MUMBAI 400018

For appointments - +91 8080055450 / 022 24930522