

DAI LI

Rich in personality and observational detail, Dai Li's delicately hand built and painted stoneware figures are exquisitely crafted from her imagination. As she says, "My art works are about the relationships between people, animals and objects in everyday life. Moments of activity, moments of contemplation or unguarded moments when no one is watching; these are the moments when people can reveal their true nature. I intend for my artworks to have a sense of ambiguity as to a story or meaning. This ambiguity leaves the viewer responsible to interpret and create meaning for him or herself from the artwork." Dai Li's technical process involves hand building each piece with white stoneware clay, creating the initial form before including the various gestural details. Using a combination of Chinese wooden tools along with her own hand made bamboo tools, Dai Li carves the delicate details in the expressions and clothing before further enhancing with colourful pigments and glazes. As a result, her works exude distinct personalities that engage with the viewer in very personal ways, at times transporting us to a distant memory or feeling. This sense of familiarity is what makes Dai Li's work's particularly appealing and reflective, with art writers Kylie Johnson and Tiffany Johnson contending that it is "this exchange between maker and observer, be it cheeky or melancholic, is Dai Li's ceramic magic".

Dai Li was born in Sichuan, China and now lives and works in Queensland. From 2005 to 2009, she attended the Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute in China and, shortly after graduating, came to Australia. She has been exhibiting regularly since her move to Australia and she has been a finalist in the Biennial North Queensland Ceramic Award in 2016 and the Tom Bass Prize for Figurative Sculpture. Dai Li's work is included in the 2023 exhibition 'Clay: Collected Ceramics' at the Museum of Brisbane and she is also one of the featured ceramicists in the book 'Earth & Fire' by Kylie Johnson and Tiffany Johnson.

BIOGRAPHY

- 1987 Born, Sichuan, China
2005-9 Bachelor of Fine Arts (Ceramics) Jingdezhen Ceramic Institute, Jiangxi, China

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 "Bittersweet – a fiction", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2022 Jan Manton Gallery, Brisbane
2021 Jan Manton Gallery, Brisbane
Bett Gallery, Hobart
2020 "Little things in life", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2019 "The familiar strangers", Jan Manton Art, Brisbane
"A moment's silence", May Space, Sydney
2017 "Dai Li: new work", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2016 "X", Gatakers Artspace, Maryborough, Qld
2015 "Dreams, ghosts and other stories", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2013 "Indistinct familiarity", BCM Crucible Gallery, Brisbane
"Lexicon", Bett Gallery, Hobart
2012 "Stranger", Miss Gladys Sym Choon, Adelaide
"The games we play", Bundaberg Regional Art Gallery, Qld
"Dai Li: recent works", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2011 "One year", Miss Gladys Sym Choon, Adelaide
"Faramita", Artisan, Brisbane
2010 "Wonderland", Art Factory Gallery, Brisbane

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2023 "Clay : Collected Ceramics", Museum of Brisbane
2020 "The Tom Bass Prize", Juniper Hall, Sydney
2018 "A point of difference" (with Kelly Austin and Kenji Uranishi), Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"Mugged!", May Space, Sydney
"Glazed", Bruce Heiser Projects, Brisbane
2017 "Small works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
"Ceramic revisions II", May Space, Sydney
"Introducing V", May Space, Sydney
"Earth and fire", QUT Art Museum, Brisbane
"Nine lives: a cat's tale", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2016 "Winter 2016", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
"Christmas exhibition", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane

- 2015 "Small works", Beaver Galleries, Canberra
2014 "Perceptions and perspectives", King Street Gallery, Sydney
"Decennalia", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2013 "Drawing a line", Caboolture Regional Art Gallery, Qld
Sydney Contemporary, Carriageworks, Sydney (Heiser Gallery, Brisbane)
"Christmas exhibition", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2012 "Something naughty or nice", Michael Reid Gallery, Sydney
"Christmas exhibition", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2011 "Bill Yaxley and Dai Li", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
"People and Places", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
"15 artists", Redcliffe City Art Gallery, Qld
"Christmas exhibition", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2010 Melbourne Art Fair, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne (Heiser Gallery, Brisbane)
"Gaze: people, relationships and place", Redland Art Gallery, Qld
"Annual Christmas exhibition", Heiser Gallery, Brisbane
2008 "Jiangxi Province Art Prize", Jiangxi, China
2007 "Jiangxi Province Art Prize", Jiangxi, China
2005 "Jiangxi Province Art Prize", Jiangxi, China

AWARDS / COMMISSIONS

- 2020 Finalist, The Tom Bass Prize, Sydney
2016 Finalist (ceramics), Biennial North Queensland Ceramic Award, Townsville, Qld
2008 Second Prize (ceramics), Jiangxi Province Art Prize, Jiangxi, China
2007 Third Prize (ceramics), Jiangxi Province Art Prize, Jiangxi, China
2005 Finalist (painting), Jiangxi Province Art Prize, Jiangxi, China

PUBLICATIONS

- 2023 "Earth & Fire", Kylie Johnson and Tiffany Johnson, *Thames & Hudson*, page 241-243
2020 "An intriguing set of sculptures with a hidden dimension", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *Canberra Times*, 27 February
"Little things in life" review, Jess Howard, *A Rich Life*, 23 Feb
2019 *Journal of Australian Ceramics*, Vol 58 July
2018 "Trio combine talents for ceramic show", Kerry-Anne Cousins, *Canberra Times*, 21 November

COLLECTIONS

Ipswich Art Gallery, Qld; Queensland University of Technology Art Museum, Brisbane