

Rosa Pinc – Ceramicist and Alchemist

“Think about the clay without prejudice”

An open mind, a sense of adventure and exploration has always been the trademark of Rosa Pinc’s approach to life and art. After studying art at university she began to produce prints from designs she etched on to metal plates. One day, wanting to experiment with other materials, Rosa accepted a friend’s invitation to have a go on her potter’s wheel. It was a moment of revelation, leading to a fascination with the whole process of making ceramics which has only deepened over the years.

Rosa explains, *“Working with clay is really an elemental process, using earth, fire and colour to make a solid object, something that can be touched, cradled in your hand.”*

Rosa’s command of and sympathy with the materials she uses is evident in all her work, from the most statuesque vase to the smallest, most delicate cup. These are objects born of strength, precision and an acute design sensibility.

Viewing a collection of Rosa’s work is to be struck by her mastery of both form and texture. Using a variety of different clays and glazes she creates bowls, vases, bottles and platters, lamp bases and candlesticks in myriad different shapes and sizes. Each piece is unique; the product of a particular batch of clay and a specific moment in Rosa’s imagination; as Brazilians would say every item ‘talks its own language.’

One of the most distinctive elements of Rosa’s work is her use of a twisting, spiralling line motif, incised in the clay before it is fired. This is a technique she brought to pottery from her metal engraving and has refined and developed to such an extent that when she shrugs and says *“All my life I have drawn lines.*

The line is me" it does not sound like exaggeration but a clear, elegant statement of fact.

Often 'Rosa's line' dictates an object's shape as she moulds the clay to follow the movements of the line she has visualised. In her hands this apparently simple device attains great versatility; the line can act as ballast, emphasising the base, rim or borders of an object yet it can also be weightless, almost aerial, drawing the eye and clay upwards and outwards, twisting like an air current on vases and bottles, flaring like the skirts of a whirling dervish on bowls and platters. Rosa describes it as a flow of energy which springs from her hand, travels through the engraving tool and takes up residence in the piece of pottery.

Mixing glazes to add colour and texture to the clay's surface sees Rosa in her alchemist's role, using ingredients like copper and cobalt to create an astonishing array of effects. A brilliant, glossy glaze illuminates the interiors of pots and bowls, giving them a lacquered finish that gleams and resonates, even in shadow. A collection of bottles have been bathed in a milky white glaze that still seems to be 'alive', a little bit fluid, undulating across the clay.

Rosa believes that close attention to colour and the way it interacts with the clay is a distinctively Brazilian aspect of her work. One of her favourite clays comes from the Sao Paulo region, "*This clay actually has a lot of impurities but I love the finish it gives to my work, speckled like a bird's feather. Often I leave it natural and unglazed.*"

As a 'complete Brazilian' who draws endless inspiration from the country's landscape and people Rosa has recently become involved with a 'social design' project. This scheme trains young people to become potters and also helps them to link up with companies who will buy their work. It is a practical venture, designed to bring together the artistic and the commercial worlds and create employment.

Rosa's work has featured in television documentaries in Brazil and numerous magazines, including *Elle*, *Casa Claudia* and *Arc Design*. She has had many solo exhibitions in Brazil, France and Portugal. In Europe her work is sold in Paris and Lisbon and it is now making its first appearance in selected London shops and galleries. Anyone who loves colour and elegance and the experience of cradling a work of art in their hands will be entranced by Rosa's unique creations.

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