



Reflections of Twelve Animal Zodiac Calendar As An Artistic Inspiration For Ceramic Teapots

ABSTRACT

In historical context, it is known that various calendars were used alongside different calculation methods. In Far Eastern Asian cultures, common calendars were used where various animals were distributed according to years, each animal carrying different meanings. In these cultures, calendars featuring “twelve animal figures” show similarities in the names of animals and their orderings. Referring to all these calendars, astrologers attempt to predict future events based on the animal representing the year. It is believed that the Zodiac system consisting of twelve constellations is also associated with a year consisting of twelve months. Although its source is not clearly known, the Twelve Animal Zodiac Calendar used in Chinese society includes animal names in the following order: rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog and pig.

Depictions of zodiac signs and constellations have been found in art since ancient times. Through contemporary art practices of today, this study is based on the theme that has found its place in contemporary art practices, primarily focusing on what the Twelve Animal Calendar signifies and its artistic reflections. In this study examining the origins and characteristics of the twelve animal signs in ancient Chinese tradition, animal metaphors used to characterize people based on their birth dates in China have been explored. An example of an artistic project themed around the Twelve Animal Calendar, compiled from works of artists from different countries, has also been evaluated within this framework. The artistic reflections of the “Twelve Animal Calendar,” which is still important in modern times, have been explained through examples of ceramic teapot exhibitions held in China between 2008 and 2019. Ceramic teapot exhibitions organized within the framework of the “Twelve Animal Calendar” covering 12 years have been evaluated among participating artists. Based on these evaluations, the artistic project themed “The Twelve Animals Calendar”, realized with the participation of artists with different ceramic practices, has led to the production of unique animal-themed teapots. With a cultural approach, this exhibition has contributed to art by emphasizing the theme of animals.

Keywords: Ceramic, Twelve-Animal Calendar, China, teapot, art project.

INTRODUCTION

The twelve animal figures of the Chinese zodiac constitute the signs of an ancient Chinese-origin calendar. This calendar has been used to represent the twelve-hour clock, the points on a compass, and the twelve-year cycle of Jupiter as seen in the skies. Ancient astronomers divided the path of Jupiter in the sky into twelve sections and assigned one of the characters of the Chinese zodiac to each, allowing people to determine which year corresponds to Jupiter’s position for character and zodiac analysis. It is known that the Chinese zodiac with twelve animals was used during the Han Dynasty period. Characters representing each year in the twelve-year zodiac cycle began to be associated with ordinary animals, revealing the current system where each symbolizes an animal (Japan Foundation, 2019).

The earliest examples of the Chinese zodiac’s existence are understood from records obtained from bamboo books approximately 2000 years ago. It is believed that the Chinese zodiac dominated before the Qin Dynasty (from 25 to 220 AD). They first appeared in the Warring States period (5th century BC) and their exact dates of creation are unknown. However, their identities were officially identified during the Han Dynasty (557-581 AD) (Chen, 2011).

There are also different pieces of information regarding the origin of the Twelve Animal Calendar. Some of these suggest that its source lies not in China but in the ancient Turkish culture. Based on the solar year, the twelve-animal calendar is the oldest calendar used by the Turks throughout history. The Göktürks (552-745), who created the Orkhon Inscriptions, the first known Turkish written monument, used the Twelve Animal Turkish Calendar. Based on a solar year, the Twelve Animal Turkish Calendar names years with animal names (Unat, 2004:18). The oldest document using the Twelve Animal Turkish calendar is the Bugut Inscription, which narrates events between AD 572-580 during the I.Turkic Khaganate. It can also be seen that the dating in the Orkhon Inscriptions is based on this calendar. According to some explanations in the 10th line of the southern face of the Bilge Khagan Inscription, it is seen that they used this calendar (Parlak, 2022). The Twelve Animal Turkish Calendar is a system consisting of twelve-year cycles, with each year named after an

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animal. The animal names that give the years their names are, respectively; Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig (Turan, 2019: 32-33).

According to Edouard Chavannes' research titled *Le Cycle Turc des Douze Animaux* (The Turkish Twelve Animal Cycle), the "Twelve Animal Calendar" used in Asia is a calendar system belonging to the Turks, and the Chinese borrowed this calendar from the Turks, naming his research "The Twelve Animal Turkish Calendar" (Turan, 2019: 15-16).

Eberhard (1996:77) suggests that the designation of the capitals of the Huns as "Dragon City" indicates that the dragon was considered a cult at that time, and therefore the Turks could have such a system. Also Turan (2019) and Chavannes (2020:35) argue that the twelve-animal calendar is a system developed by the Turks. According to Thomsen (2010:90), who claims that the origin of the calendar is a system developed by the Chinese, the Turks encountered such a system because of their close relationship with the Chinese. Contrary to Bazin (2011:126-127), Chavannes (2020:35) states that the calendar was recognized by the Chinese through their close relations with the Huns.

According to legend, Lord Buddha determined the 12 animal zodiac of Chinese astrology. Before departing from the earth, Lord Buddha invited all the animals to come to him. Only 12 animals showed up to bid him farewell, and as a reward, he named a year after each animal in the order they arrived. The first animal to arrive was the talkative rat, followed by the hardworking ox, active tiger, detached rabbit, outspoken dragon, philosophical snake, energetic horse, artistic goat, irrepressible monkey, candid rooster, watchful dog and lastly, the resigned pig (Wu, 2005).

Some people believe that the 12 Chinese zodiac animals are simplified from the 28 animals that represent the 28 constellations in ancient Chinese astronomy, while some insist that the zodiac's relationship with Jupiter's revolution period is just about 12 years. The most popular theory is the totem saying of the origin related to animal worship (Travel China Guide, 2024).

According to another interesting legend about the origin of the Chinese zodiac, the Jade Emperor wanted 12 animals as his palace guards. He organized a race for them where they had to cross a rapid current river and reach the finish line situated on the shore. Originally, there was a cat and a rat who hated each other. They were the worst swimmers and hence decided to take the help of the generous ox and cross the river on his back. But the rat was resolute to win hence pushed the cat into the river, thus wasn't included in the race. Another variation is that the rat never told the cat about the race and hence never competed. After crossing the river, the clever rat jumped off the ox's back and made it to the first position. The ox came second followed by the tiger; the last position was held by the pig as he took a food break. Each animal acquiring its year symbolizes the nature and characteristics of the person born in that animal's year (Travel China Guide, 2024).

ART INFLUENCED BY THE TWELVE ANIMAL CALENDAR

Art evolving around animals has been a prevalent theme in art since cave paintings to the present day. The acceptance of animals as protective spirits in the form of a divine power has developed within the framework of animal ancestor beliefs. With a desire to respect the remains of animals and to utilize the power possessed by animals for one's own benefit, a diverse range of animal depictions has emerged over time, leading to the emergence of an art style where animal portrayals are frequently featured (Çoruhlu, 2002: 116). In addition to the animals encountered in nature, mythical creatures laden with symbolic meanings such as power, protection, and talisman have been depicted in various works ranging from daily use items to primitive weapons (Bilici, 1983: 20). Shaped around the metaphor of animals, the Twelve Animal Calendar, believed by the Chinese who think that the animal governing a person's birth year has a profound impact on personality and destiny (unlike Western astrology, which is based on the months of the year according to solar calendar) has been based on a twelve-year cycle where each year is represented by an animal. Also used in East Asian countries and traditionally referred to as "Sheng Xiao" in Chinese Zodiac, the twelve animals in the sequence are: Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog and Pig. In relation to these animals symbolizing the birth signs, attempts have been made to explain how individuals might be affected in areas such as personality, love life, career, lifestyle and health. Chinese Zodiac signs are determined not by the month of birth, but by the lunar year in which you were born. The Chinese believe that the animal ruling the year of your birth has a profound influence on your personality and destiny (Chen, 2011).

The art understanding rooted in the Twelve Animal Calendar has been frequently used in Central Asian cultures, Anatolian Turkish Islamic arts and Chinese civilizations. H. Ö. Çabuk and S. Eren (2023) drew attention to artistic practices in Anatolia with their architectural examples in their study titled "Animal Depictions Associated with the Twelve Animal Turkish Calendar" in Anatolian Stone Ornamentation. In this

context, animal figures in art and architecture have evolved and been stylized based on animal styles. Twelve-animal-themed artworks are also common in contemporary art practices. Chinese artist Ai Weiwei's artwork "Life Cycle" for instance, refers to the twelve-animal-themed calendar. Beginning in 2013, Ai Weiwei started creating works using traditional kite-making techniques with bamboo as the medium. These works, produced in the Chinese town of Weifang in Shandong Province, where kite-making tradition dates back to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), include installations such as "Wind" exhibited in the at Large: Ai Weiwei on Alcatraz exhibition in San Francisco in 2014 and the "Shanghaiing" works, first exhibited in Paris' Le Bon Marche in 2016. In "Life Cycle", Ai reinterprets the motif of the zodiac boat through kite-making, crafting a large-scale boat and human figures using bamboo and sisal twine. The figures in the boat also have the heads of the twelve animals of the Chinese Zodiac (Fig. 1-2-3). The concept of this artwork originated from "Law of the Journey" (2016), one of Ai's sculptural responses to the global refugee crisis, made in black PVC plastic and inflatable, mirroring the shoddy boats used by refugees to reach Europe (Ai Weiwei Rapture Portugal Personal Exhibition, 2021).



Fig. 1: Ai Weiwei, *Life Cycle*, 'Rapture', Cordoaria Nacional, Portugal, Lisbon.
Source: Author Archive, September 30, 2021.



Fig. 2-3: Ai Weiwei, *Life Cycle*, 'Rapture', Cordoaria Nacional, Portugal, Lisbon.

Source: Author Archive, September 30, 2021.

REFLECTIONS OF TWELVE ANIMAL ZODIAC CALENDAR ON CERAMIC TEAPOTS

In China, it is a tradition that when a person is born, one animal (Shuxiang) is used to symbolize that year. Shuxiang, also known as Shengxiao (any of the 12 animals representing the Earthly Branches), is a traditional way in China to number the years and record a person's age. Unlike the Gregorian calendar, commonly used worldwide, which expresses the year by progression since the start of the Christian era (e.g., 2002 AD), the Chinese lunar calendar numbers the years differently. Ancient Chinese people invented a method to designate the years by the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches. Combining each of the 10 Heavenly Stems with one of the 12 Earthly Branches in a sequence creates 60 chronological symbols. Later, people used 12 animals to correspond to the 12 Earthly Branches, forming the 12 Symbolic Animals.

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The Ceramic Teapot Exhibition themed on the "Twelve Animals Calendar" started in China in 2008, covering 12 years and using animal metaphors corresponding to each year. This project was organized by Hwang Jeng-daw, a Taiwanese curator and artist, with the participation of 115 artists.

Hwang Jeng-daw, born in Taiwan, is an internationally renowned ceramic teapot maker. Participating in ceramic art events in more than 30 countries, the artist has been a guest artist at various universities, art centers, and city administrations in countries such as the UK, China, France, Poland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Korea, Lithuania, Norway, The United States, New Zealand and Turkey. His works are extensively collected in museums worldwide, including the George R. Gardiner Museum of Ceramic Art in Canada, the American Museum of Ceramic Art in the US, and the Faenza International Ceramics Museum in Italy (Helvacikara, 2023). The project involved ceramic teapots representing the animal figures corresponding to each year from 2008 to 2019. Each year's animal symbol, including Rat, Ox/Cow, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep/Goat, Rooster/Hen, Dog and Pig, formed the theme of the ceramic teapot exhibitions. Through this project, contemporary artists' depictions of animals were widely showcased.

Year of The Rat

The first year covered in the project, corresponding to 1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996 and 2008, is considered the Rat year. In Chinese astrology, the Rat, with its characteristics of charm, creativity, and a strong desire for survival, is represented by this zodiac sign. Despite being charming and talkative, individuals born under this sign are believed to have an introverted nature. Known for their diligence, skillfulness, ambition, and intelligence, those born under this sign tend to set clear goals in their careers and lives.

The first concept of the ceramic teapot exhibition, themed on the Rat year in 2008, featured artworks by various artists, including Ekaterina Suhareve (**Fig. 4**), Hwang Jeng-daw (**Fig. 5**), Rimas Visgirda (**Fig. 6**), Peter Lange (**Fig. 7**), Adam Abel (**Fig. 8**), Hennie Meyer (**Fig. 9**), Janet DeBoos (**Fig. 10**), Vipoo Srivilasa (**Fig. 11**), Jiri Lastovicka (**Fig. 12-13**), Kadri Parnamets, Kulli Koiv and Urmas Puhkan.



Fig. 4: Ekaterina Suhareve, from Russia, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 5: Hwang Jeng-daw, from Taiwan, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Fig. 6: Rimas VisGirda, from USA, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 7: Peter Lange, from New Zealand, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Fig. 8: Adam Abel, from Poland, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 9: Hennie Meyer, from South Africa, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Fig. 10: Janet DeBoos, from Australia, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 11: Vipoo Srivilasa, from Thai-Australian, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 12-13: Jiri Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.
Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Among these artists is Kadri Parnamets, born in 1968 (**Fig. 14-15**), who graduated from the Tallinn Art University in 1994. As a leading member of the Estonian Artists' Union, the artist continues his work and has participated in numerous international symposiums. These include the "International Porcelain Symposium" in Kaunas, Lithuania, the "International Symposium" in Zvartava, Latvia, the "Brattvag International Symposium" in Norway, and the "Kohila International Wood Firing Symposium" in Estonia. Kadri Parnamets works have been exhibited in many galleries and museums in Denmark, Estonia, Norway, Sweden, Hungary, Switzerland, and Lithuania. His works are part of the collections of the "Tallinn Applied Art Museum" in Estonia, the "Latvian Applied Art Museum" and the "Lithuanian Ceramic Museum".



Fig. 14-15: Kadri Parnamets, from Estonia, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.
Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Estonian artist Külli Koiv, who was featured in the "Rat Teapots 2008 Exhibition" (**Fig. 16-17**), has also participated in the Monkey, Dog and Rabbit Teapots exhibitions. She is known as one of the organizers of the Kohila International Ceramic Symposium. Koiv shapes her forms by hand and colors them by using the wood firing method. Since 2000, she has been conducting wood firings in Estonia using large anagama-type kilns, drawing inspiration from the infinite sources of nature to employ natural warm colors on her ceramics, achieved through the reaction created by the combination of flame, ash, salt, and soda during firing. Through the Kohila International Ceramic Symposium, Koiv continues to participate in these events with the aim of popularizing wood firing among artists and sculptors (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019).

Urmas Puhkan is one of the artists who participated in the Rat (**Fig.18**) and Dog Teapot exhibitions. Graduating from the Ceramic Department of the Estonian Academy of Arts in 1992, Puhkan has been participating in national and international exhibitions, competitions and symposiums since 1990. He is a member of the Estonian Artists' Association and the Estonian Ceramic Artists' Association. Puhkan is also an artist and manager at Asuurkeraamika and has been serving as the Head of the Department at the Estonian Academy of Arts since 1999 (International Ceramic Exhibition, 2013). Continuously exploring the boundaries of ceramics, Puhkan has created works that combine ceramics with different materials. He emphasizes that through these works, ceramics can convey multiple meanings on their own. In his teapot artwork, he has

experimented with combinations that could bring together seemingly disparate forms such as a car, a mouse and a teapot. Puhkan expresses that the axis of creating surreal worlds with ceramics has always been exciting for him (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019).



Fig. 16-17: Kulli Koiv, from Estonia, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 18: Urmas Puhkan, from Estonia, The Rat Teapot 2008 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Ox / Cow

Figures of ox/cow are present in the second of the Chinese zodiac signs. The years of the ox/cow from the past to the present can be listed as 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021. Known as symbols of strength and determination, this zodiac sign stands out for its resilience and hard work. They possess a characteristic of slowly springing into action after thorough and persistent planning, and once the plan is made, they can overcome any kind of difficulty. In China, the ox/cow is also a symbol of undivided parental love due to the sensitivity it shows while nurturing its calves. Oxen are deeply attached to their families and children. Parents born under this zodiac sign show great affection, care, and sacrifice for their children. The ox, with its innate authority and strong determination, views those born under this sign as

reliable and patriotic leaders. They have strong ambitions in life, and with pure stubbornness and great patience, they can overcome difficulties to achieve their goals. This incredible resilience against challenges keeps their families and nations bonded together. They are not easily influenced by their surroundings and prefer to do things according to their own ideals and compatibilities (Wu, 2005).

The year 2009 marked the occurrence of the “Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots” exhibition. Artists such as Kadri Parnamets (Fig. 19), Hwang Jeng-daw (Fig. 20), Janet DeBoos (Fig. 21), Mardi Wood (Fig. 22), Rafael Navas (Fig. 23), Ekaterina Suhareva (Fig. 24), Rimas VisGirda and Hennie Meyer participated in this exhibition.



Fig. 19: Kadri Parnamets, from Estonia, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Fig. 20: Hwang Jeng-daw, from Taiwan, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 21: Janet DeBoos, from Australia, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Fig. 22: Mardi Wood, from USA, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 23: Rafael Navas, from Spain, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Fig. 24: Ekaterina Suhareva, from Russia, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Artist Rimas VisGirda (**Fig. 25**) is a Lithuanian-born American ceramic artist and educator. VisGirda applies decals depicting socio-critical caricature onto ceramic surfaces as a secret glaze (Eutectic Gallery, n.d.). Apart from the Rat Teapots Exhibition, VisGirda has also participated in the Rabbit Teapots, Ox/Cow and Dragon Teapots exhibitions.

Hennie Meyer is a renowned South African ceramicist. Constantly experimenting with the impressive qualities of clay and glaze, Hennie strives to create a balance between strong form and highly detailed surfaces through composite shapes. Having received ceramic education in both Australia and South Africa, the artist has held extensive exhibitions nationally and internationally, with his works featured in numerous permanent collections and international publications (Artvark Gallery, 1998). In addition to the Ox/Cow Themed Teapot Exhibition (**Fig. 26**), Hennie Meyer has also participated in the Rat and Rabbit Teapots exhibitions.



Fig. 25: Rimas VisGirda, from USA, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Fig. 26: Hennie Meyer, from South Africa, The Ox/Cow 2009 Ceramic Teapots.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Tiger

The animal figure that takes the third place in the Chinese zodiac signs of the Twelve Animal Calendar is the tiger. The years of the tiger are 2034, 2022, 2010, 1998, 1986 and 1974 listing the dates should be consistent through the paper (e.g. from the earliest to the future date...). The tiger is known as the king of all animals in China. As a zodiac sign, the tiger is the symbol of power, dispelling evil, and courage. It is also known as a symbol of strength, unwavering courage, and nobility. People born in the year of the tiger are known for their noble, authoritative, brave, strong moral and religious beliefs. In this zodiac sign, believed to have a high self-esteem, independent and antisocial behaviors can be observed. Due to their competitive nature, they tend to successfully overcome challenges. This zodiac sign, determined to achieve career goals, is recognized as natural leaders with great self-confidence respected by others. Likewise, they are known for their authority and high positions (Zhao, 2024).

Liisa Pahk (**Fig. 27**), John Goodheart (**Fig. 28**), Jiri Lastovicka (**Fig. 29**), Ekaterina Sukhareva (**Fig. 30**), Lauri Kilusk, Kersti Laanmaa and Ilona Romule are artists who participated in the Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.



Fig. 27: Liisa Pahk, from Estonia, The Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.

Fig. 28: John Goodheart, from USA, The Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 29: Jiri Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.

Fig. 30: Ekaterina Sukhareva, from Russia, The Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



In 2010, one of the artists who participated in the “Tiger Teapots Ceramic Exhibition” is Lauri Kilusk. The artist (**Fig. 31**), who also participated in the Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake and Horse Teapots exhibitions, was admitted to the Estonian Academy of Arts in 1997 and began his professional ceramic career. Lauri Kilusk spent a semester as an exchange student at East Carolina University in 2001. Meeting many artists in the state of North Carolina and visiting schools, the artist improved his skills in working with clay by observing different ceramic techniques. Invited to join the “Asuurkeraamika” ceramic group, Lauri Kilusk contributed to many inspiring projects with Asuurkeraamika. Among the most interesting projects, he conducted various artistic experiments with video, animation, sound, and kinetic objects together with Urmas Puhkan. Always using clay as an indispensable element in these projects, the artist participated in the Lauri International Kohila Symposium in 2005 and became part of the collection of the Estonian Museum of Applied Art and Design. Continuously striving to keep his work up to date by exploring experimental aspects of ceramic materials and acquiring new skills with new approaches to materials, Lauri Kilusk continues his work as an artist (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019).



Fig. 31: Lauri Kilusk, from Estonia, The Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.
Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Another artist who participated in the “Tiger Teapots Ceramic Exhibition” is Kersti Laanmaa. Kersti Laanmaa (**Fig. 32**) also participated in the Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Sheep and Chicken Teapots exhibitions. Working with the slab technique and often featuring animal themes in her works, the artist frequently uses these themes to tell stories related to humans. In her works, human behaviors and societal perspectives are identified with animals. Although anthropomorphism² is something the artist generally tries to avoid, Kersti’s works often exhibit humorous approaches. In Kersti’s functional ceramics such as cups, plates, vases, and teapots, everyday objects are artistically processed. These works are realized through oxidation or reduction firings.

Ilona Romule is an artist who has participated in many teapot exhibitions. She has participated in the Tiger (**Fig. 33-34**), Rabbit, Dragon and Snake Teapots exhibitions. When naming her own work, she prefers to call them “colorful three-dimensional stories” rather than ceramics. The artist reflects her imagination in her art along with events and stories from her daily life. While sometimes depicted as animals, the paintings are part of a cycle involving a man and a woman. Emphasizing nudity, the artist highlights the judgment that only nudity can be true, with the rest being societal prejudice. She expresses that everyone has their own story, and art production is entirely shaped around this individual matter. Therefore, Ilona Romule avoids explaining her works and instead asks others, “What do you see?” She states that whether one likes or dislikes what they see doesn’t matter. What matters is not being indifferent. The artist expresses discomfort with indifference. While discussing that material and technique shouldn’t take priority, she emphasizes that only the execution should be professional. She argues that the idea being too professional to overcome, the material (porcelain) forms the “language” of the artwork, thus advocating for the principle that the language here should be fluent and flawless. She emphasizes that it’s not about in which language you remain silent, but which language you speak (Helvacikara, 2023).

² The showing or treating of animals, gods, and objects as if they are human in appearance, character, or behaviour (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.).



Fig. 32: Kersti Laanmaa, from Estonia, The Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.

Fig. 33-34: Ilona Romule, from Latvia, The Tiger Teapots 2010 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Rabbit

The fourth animal zodiac sign covering the years 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011 and 2023 is the Rabbit. Integrated with talented, calm, creative, and gentle behaviors, the Rabbit zodiac sign stands out for its honorable and reserved behaviors, emphasizing respect for privacy. This zodiac sign is characterized by preferring to be its own advisor by solely listening to its inner intuitions. Due to their fondness for spending time alone, they show a disposition that doesn't complain about solitude. In Chinese mythology, the Rabbit is also known as the pet of the moon goddess Chang'e. According to an ancient Chinese legend, the moon goddess Chang'e raises a jade rabbit as a pet. Chang'e and the jade rabbit are often depicted in artworks made for the Mid-Autumn Festival (Kiinalainenuusivuosi, 2023). During the Mid-Autumn Festival, people carrying rabbit lanterns can be seen. Here, the rabbit symbolizes purity and friendship. According to Taoist philosophy, the world consists of two forces: yin and yang³. The Rabbit zodiac sign is associated with yin. The Rabbit is considered the luckiest of the twelve animals. In China, the rabbit is a common symbol of luck and hope. Additionally, since the rabbit is a sensitive animal trained to perceive nearby danger with its sharp senses, it has symbolized vigilance and awareness in China since ancient times (Kiinalainenuusivuosi, 2023).

The Rabbit Teapots Exhibition took place in 2011. The ceramic artists who participated in this exhibition include Kadri Parnamets (**Fig. 35**), Hwang Jeng-daw (**Fig. 36-37**), Sergey Sorinskiy (**Fig. 38**), Rimas VisGirda (**Fig. 39**), Billie Jean Theide (**Fig. 40**), Hennie Meyer (**Fig. 41**), Kulli Koiv (**Fig. 42**), Lauri Kilusk (**Fig. 43-44**), Kersti Laanmaa (**Fig. 45**), Liisa Pahk (**Fig. 46**), Ilona Romule (**Fig. 47**), Vipoo Srivilasa (Fig. 48), Sandra Black (**Fig. 49**), Jiri Lastovicka (**Fig. 50**), Duncan Shearer (**Fig. 51**), Janice Hunter (**Fig. 52**), Ekaterina Sukhareva (**Fig. 53**), Julia Klopova, Sergey E. Sukharev and Zhong Yunsu.

³ The principle of Yin and Yang is the existence of inseparable and contradictory opposites, such as female-male, dark-light, and old-young. Equal and opposite pairs attract and complement each other (Cartwright, 2018).



Fig. 35: Kadri Parnamets, from Estonia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.
Fig. 36-37: Hwang Jeng-daw, from Taiwan, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.
Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019



Fig. 38: Sergey Sorinskiy, from Russia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.
Fig. 39: Rimas VisGirda, from USA, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.
Fig. 40: Billie Jean Theide, from USA, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.
Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 41: Hennie Meyer, from South Africa, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.
Fig. 42: Kulli Koiv, from Estonia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.
Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 43- 44: Lauri Kilusk, from Estonia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 45: Kersti Laanmaa, from Estonia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 46: Liisa Pahk, from Estonia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 47: Ilona Romule, from Latvia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 48: Vipoo Srivilasa, from Australia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 49: Sandra Black, from Australia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 50: Jiri Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 51: Duncan Shearer, from New Zealand, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 52: Janice Hunter, from Denmark, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 53: Ekaterina Sukhareva, from Russia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Julia Klopova (**Fig. 54**), who graduated from the Ceramic Department of the Saint Petersburg Academy of Applied Arts in 1999, has participated in numerous international exhibitions and symposiums. Since 2002, the artist has been creating replicas of Italian majolicas (tin- enameled earthenware) for the Russia Saint Petersburg State Hermitage Museum and became a member of the Russian Artists' Union in 2004. Julia Klopova, who works at the Ceramic Department of the Saint Petersburg Academy of Applied Arts, continues to give private ceramics lessons in preschool educational institutions (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008-2019).

Sergey E. Sukharev, who participated in the Rabbit Teapot 2011 Exhibition (**Fig. 55**), is among the participating artists. Graduating from the Saint-Petersburg Academy of Arts and Design in 1992, Sergey E. Sukharev has been serving as the Head of the Ceramic and Glass Design Department since 2013. The artist, who participates in international exhibitions and symposiums, has been a member of the Russian Artists' Union since 1994. His works are presented in private collections in Russia, France, The USA, Germany, Finland, China, and Austria (Museum of Saint-Petersburg Academy of Arts and Design, 2011).

Zhong Yunsu is a Chinese artist who participated in the Rabbit Teapot Exhibition (**Fig. 56**). Graduating from The Ceramic Technology and Design Department of the China Academy of Art in 2008, Zhong Yunsu won the “Breakthrough- Young Ceramicists Pottery Award” at the “2nd Promising Young Ceramicists Works Biennial Exhibition” in China with his first work, “Shi-Shi”. After graduating from the China Academy of Art, he worked at the Yuanzhitang Culture and Art Company, where he designed creative products such as the “West Lake Series”. The artist, who also won an award with his work “City Signage of Porcelain Decoration” in Hangzhou, is currently working at the China Yellow Rice Wine Museum, focusing on the design of wine vessels and drawings of Huadiao wine (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw, 2008-2019).



Fig. 54: Julia Klopova, from Russia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 55: Sergey E. Sukharev, from Russia, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Fig. 56: Zhong Yunsu, from China, The Rabbit Teapots 2011 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Dragon

The dragon, symbolizing power, honor, and success, occupies the fifth position in the Chinese zodiac, covering years such as 1988, 2000, 2012 and 2024. Considered a sign of good luck and health, the dragon, a legendary creature in Chinese culture, is the most powerful and influential sign. The dragons are believed to possess the power to influence and lead. Those born under this sign are known for their ambition and determination to overcome any obstacle to reach the pinnacle of success. They are renowned for working tirelessly day and night to achieve their goals and aspirations. They symbolize life and growth (Wu, 2005).

In the Dragon Teapot Exhibition held in 2012, the participating artists included Ekaterina Sukhareva (**Fig. 57**), Rimasa VisGirda (**Fig. 58**), Lauri Kilusk (**Fig. 59**), Kersti Laanmaa (**Fig. 60**), Kadri Parnamets (**Fig. 61-62**), Ilona Romule (**Fig. 63**), Trudy Golley & Paul Leathers (**Fig. 64**), Martha Pachon (**Fig. 65**), Jiri Lastovicka (**Fig. 66**), Antonella Cimatti (**Fig. 67**), Sandra Black (**Fig. 68**), Sarah Michael, Krisaya Luenganantakul and Rolando Giovannini & Laura Silvagni.



Fig. 57: Ekaterina Sukhareva, from Russia, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Fig. 58: Rimasa VisGirda, from USA, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Fig. 59: Lauri Kilusk, from Estonia, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 60: Kersti Laanmaa, from Estonia, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Fig. 61-62: Kadri Parnamets, from Estonia, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 63: Ilona Romule, from Latvia, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.



Fig. 64: Trudy Golley & Paul Leathers, from Canada, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 65: Martha Pachon, from Italy, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 66: Jiri Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.



Fig. 67: Antonella Cimatti, from Italy, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.



Fig. 68: Sandra Black, from Australia, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Sarah Michael, besides participating in the Dragon Teapot Exhibition (**Fig. 69**), has also participated in the Horse and Dog Teapots exhibitions. Working in the field of ceramics for about 20 years, Sarah Michael mainly uses paper-clay and porcelain in her works. She utilizes ceramics as a three-dimensional canvas with colorful glazes. Her works have been exhibited in numerous galleries in the Netherlands and Canada, and she regularly participates in ceramic festivals across Europe. Additionally, she organizes one of the Netherlands' ceramic festivals called "Clay2day Biennially". Krisaya Luenganantakul, a ceramic artist and educator, is another artist who participated in the Dragon Teapot Exhibition (**Fig. 70**). She earned her bachelor's degree in Ceramic Fine Arts from Oregon University in 2002, followed by a master's degree from the School for American Crafts. Since 2005, she has been teaching Sculpture and Ceramics at the Department of Art, Music and Dance at Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok, Thailand. Growing up in a Thai Chinese family, the artist continues her artistic life in Bangkok, incorporating themes of women's roles from Thai and Chinese cultures into her works (Sarah Michael Ceramics, n.d.).

Rolando Giovannini, born in Italy in 1949, is an artist who participated in the Dragon (**Fig. 71**) and Sheep Teapots exhibitions. Holding the title of Knight of the Order of Merit of the Italian Republic, Rolando

Giovannini is the director of the State Art Institute in Faenza. With a degree in geology and a diploma from the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, the artist has also been serving as a professor in the field of mosaic at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ravenna since 2007. Known as the founder of the neo-ceramic and ceramic tile design department at the International Ceramic Museum in Faenza, the artist's works are part of collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, the Barcelona Ceramic Museum, and the International Ceramic Museum in Faenza. Additionally, his works are publicly displayed at the Shin-Kobe Metropolitan Station in Japan. Rolando Giovannini also participated in the Dragon Teapots exhibition with a collaborative work with Laura Silvagni, who specializes in majolica technique (RolandoGiovannini, 2012).



Fig. 69: Sarah Michael, from The Netherlands, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Fig. 70: Krisaya Luengnantakul, from Thailand, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 71: Rolando Giovannini & Laura Silvagni, from Italy, The Dragon Teapot 2012 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Snake

The sixth position in the Chinese zodiac is occupied by the snake, known as the little dragon in Chinese culture. The “Year of the Snake” covers years such as 1941, 1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013 and 2025. While this animal is mostly considered ominous and frightens people, it is also respected as a creature in Chinese tradition. In Chinese folklore, a snake found in the backyard is believed to bring good luck. According to Chinese mythology, the body of the creative goddess Nuwa (Nu Gua) is that of a snake, while her head is in human form. Individuals born under the snake sign are patient, calculating, and quite powerful. With their mysterious demeanor, character, and graceful behavior, they can easily captivate others (Goway, n.d.).

Participating artists in the Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition included Sandra Black (**Fig. 72**), Kersti Laanmaa (**Fig. 73**), Martha Pachon (**Fig. 74**), Julia Klopova (**Fig. 75**), Kadri Parnamets (**Fig. 76**), Ilona Romule (**Fig. 77**), Ruta Sipalyte and Carol Gouthro (**Fig. 78**).



Fig. 72: Sandra Black, from Australia, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.

Fig. 73: Kersti Laanmaa, from Estonia, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 74: Martha Pachon, from Italy, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 75: Julia Klopova, from Russia, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.



Fig. 76: Kadri Parnamets, from Estonia, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 77: Ilona Romule, from Latvia, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.

Fig. 78: Carol Gouthro, from USA, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Ruta Sipalyte, apart from the Snake Teapots Exhibition (**Fig. 79-80**), has also participated in the Dog, Sheep, Chicken and Pig Teapots exhibitions. She holds a master's degree in ceramics from the Applied Arts Department of the Vilnius Academy of Arts, which she completed between 1992 and 1998. Working in her private studio and residing in Vilnius, Lithuania, the artist has been participating in exhibitions and international ceramic workshops in Lithuania, Belgium, Canada, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Ireland, Norway, France, and Taiwan since 1994. Her works are displayed in the "Vilnius Academy of Arts Museum" and the "Yingge Ceramic Museum" in Taipei County, Taiwan (Ceramics Now, 2022).



Fig. 79-80: Ruta Sipalyte, from Lithuania, The Snake Teapots 2013 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of the Horse

The horse, which covers the years 1990, 2002, 2014 and 2026 in the Chinese zodiac, ranks seventh in the Chinese zodiac calendar. Individuals born under the horse sign have strong desires for self-expression and are always willing to help their friends with their innate leadership qualities. By nature, they exhibit honorable and optimistic traits. Due to their ambitious nature, they serve as an inspiration to others and are known as a generous and hospitable sign (Bansal, Mishra, 2021: 26). Participating artists in the Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition include Ekaterina Sukhareva (**Fig. 81**), Sarah Michael (**Fig. 82**), Lauri Kilusk (**Fig. 83**), Marion Isabelle Varik (**Fig. 84**), Anne Turn (**Fig. 85**), Sandra Black (**Fig. 86**), Eugenia Loginova (**Fig. 87**), Jiri Lastovicka (**Fig. 88**), Karin Kalman, İsmet Yüksel and Oya Aşan Yüksel.



Fig. 81: Ekaterina Sukhareva, from Russia, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Fig. 82: Sarah Michael, from The Netherlands, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Fig. 83: Lauri Kilusk, from Estonia, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 84: Marion Isabelle Varik, from Estonia, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Fig. 85: Anne Turn, from Estonia, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Fig. 86: Sandra Black, from Australia, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 87: Eugenia Loginova, from Latvia, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Fig. 88: Jiri Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Karin Kalman is one of the participating artists in the Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition (**Fig. 89**). She was born in Tallinn, Estonia, in 1962. She graduated as a ceramic artist from the Estonian State Art Institute in 1986 and has been a member of the Estonian Artists' Union since 1992. Since 1993, she has been teaching ceramics at the Estonian Academy of Arts and has participated in ceramic conferences and symposiums in Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Finland, Norway, Iceland, Hungary, and Germany (Saaremaa Kunstistuudio, n.d). Working with various ceramic materials such as porcelain and chamotte, the artist creates not only functional products but also ceramic sculptures (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019).

İsmet Yüksel is an artist who participated in the Horse Teapots (**Fig. 90**) as well as the Sheep and Dog Teapots exhibitions. He was born in 1981. He completed his undergraduate education at Anadolu University Faculty of Fine Arts Ceramics department between 1999-2004, his master's degree at Dokuz Eylül University Fine Arts Institute Ceramics and Glass Design Department in 2011, and his Proficiency in Art education at the same institution in 2014. He participated in various exhibitions and symposiums at home and abroad. Between 2007

and 2014, he worked as a research assistant in the Ceramics department of Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Fine Arts. He currently continues to work as a Lecturer at Dumlupınar University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Ceramics. He has three personal exhibitions and a total of 5 awards, including the International Faenza Prize Ceramics competition award (Güray Müze, n.d.).

Oya Aşan Yüksel is another artist who participated in the Horse Teapots exhibition (**Fig. 91**) and showed her work in the Dog and Sheep Teapots exhibitions. She completed her undergraduate education in 2005 and graduated from Anadolu University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Ceramics. In 2010, she worked at the Ceramics Department of Nottingham Trent University with the Erasmus exchange program. She completed her master's degree at Dokuz Eylül University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Ceramics and Glass Design in 2011, and her Proficiency in Art education at the same university in 2014. She continues her work as an Associate Professor at Kütahya Dumlupınar University, Faculty of Fine Arts, Department of Ceramics.



Fig. 89: Karin Kalman, from Estonia, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Fig. 90: İsmet Yüksel, from Turkey, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Fig. 91: Oya Aşan Yüksel, from Turkey, The Horse Teapots 2014 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Sheep / Goat / Ram

The eighth position in the Chinese zodiac, covering the years 2003, 2015, 2027 and 2039, is held by the gentle, calm, and artistically talented sheep/goat/ram. They use their intelligence constructively to prevent any harm. They are characterized by sensitivity, strength, determination, and success in creativity, as well as excellent professional skills. They can sense the right time to take action (Wu, 2005).

Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 exhibition featured the participation of Ingrid Allik (**Fig. 92**), Kersti Laanmaa (**Fig. 93**), Ruta Sipalyte (**Fig. 94**), Mirta Morigi (**Fig. 95**), Oya Aşan Yüksel (**Fig. 96**), İsmet Yüksel (**Fig. 97**), Hayati Çil (**Fig. 98**), Jiri Lastovicka (**Fig. 99**), Rolando Giovannini (**Fig. 100**) and Julia Repina.



Fig. 92: Ingrid Allik, from Estonia, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Fig. 93: Kersti Laanmaa, from Estonia, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Fig. 94: Ruta Sipalyte, from Lithuania, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 95: Mirta Morigi, from Italy, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Fig. 96: Oya Asan Yüksel, from Turkey, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Fig. 97: İsmet Yüksel, from Turkey, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 98: Hayati Çil, from Turkey, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Fig. 99: Jiri Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Fig. 100: Rolando Giovannini, from Italy, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Julia Repina, a graduate of the Ceramic Department of the Saint Petersburg Art and Industry Academy, is one of the artists participating in the exhibition (**Fig. 101-102**). She is a member of the International Artists Federation and the Russian Artists Union. Julia Repina also participated in the Tiger Teapots exhibition held in 2010. Besides working as a graphic designer, she has produced artworks inspired by ceramic sculptures. Drawing inspiration from Latin American and African cultures, the artist focuses on male, female and animal figures (International Ceramic Artist Association, n.d.).



Fig. 101-102: Julia Repina, from Russia, The Sheep / Goat / Ram Teapots 2015 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Monkey

The Monkey ranks ninth in the 12-year cycle of the Chinese zodiac. The years of the Monkey include 1992, 2004, 2016, and 2028. In the Chinese zodiac, the ninth position is held by the intelligent, skilled, and mentally agile Monkey. In traditional Chinese culture, the Monkey is considered a mascot that prays for good luck in one's career. People born in the Year of the Monkey are considered unbalanced geniuses of the cycle. They are clever, resourceful, and flexible; they can easily solve the most difficult problems and are highly creative and original. Sensible Monkey people have a deep desire for knowledge and possess excellent memories (Goway, n.d.). In Chinese mythology, "Sun Wukong", born from a magical stone atop the Flower and Fruit Mountain, is known as the clever, brave "Monkey King" (Asialogy, 2023).

The artists participating in the Monkey Teapots 2016 Exhibition are Kulli Koiv (**Fig. 103**), İsmet Yüksel (**Fig. 104-105**), Hayati Çil (**Fig. 106**), Hwang Jeng-daw (**Fig. 107**) and Eugenia Loginova.

Eugenia Loginova (**Fig. 108**) obtained her master's degree in art from the Latvian Academy of Art in 1982. She was later invited to work in the Ceramic Department, where she currently serves as an associate professor. Experimenting with various clays, the artist especially works with earthenware, red clay, stoneware and porcelain (Galerie Aqvi Siam Ben (n.d.).



Fig. 103: Kulli Koiv, from Estonia, The Monkey Teapots 2016 Exhibition.

Fig. 104- 105: İsmet Yüksel, from Turkey, The Monkey Teapots 2016 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 106: Hayati Çil, from Turkey, The Monkey Teapots 2016 Exhibition.



Fig. 107: Hwang Jeng-daw, from Taiwan, The Monkey Teapots 2016 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 108: Eugenia Loginova, from Latvia, The Monkey Teapots 2016 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of the Rooster / Chicken

Rooster/Chicken ranks tenth among the twelve Chinese zodiac signs. The years of the Rooster/Chicken include 1981, 1993, 2005 and 2017. In ancient times when alarm clocks were not available, the rooster played an important role in waking people up. Therefore, the first symbolic meaning of the Rooster zodiac sign is punctuality. Additionally, ancient people believed that roosters and rooster blood could ward off evil spirits, so the rooster is also a embodiment of good luck (TravelChinaGuide, 2024).

The artists participating in the Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition are Audry Grostieta Garcia (**Fig. 109**), Pille Kaleviste (**Fig. 110**), Kersti Laanmaa (**Fig. 111**), Mirta Morigi (**Fig. 112**), Melissa and Inguna (**Fig. 113**), Ruta Sipalyte (**Fig. 114**), İsmet Yüksel (**Fig. 115**), Hwang Jeng-daw (**Fig. 116**) and Anatolii Borodkin.



Fig. 109: Audry Grostieta Garcia, from Mexico, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Fig. 110: Pille Kaleviste, from Estonia, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Fig. 111: Kersti Laanmaa, from Estonia, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 112: Mirta Morigi, from Italy, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Fig. 113: Melissa and Inguna, from Lithuania, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 114: Ruta Sipalyte, from Lithuania, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Fig. 115: İsmet Yüksel, from Turkey, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Fig. 116: Hwang Jeng-daw, from Taiwan, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Anatolii Borodkin (**Fig. 117**) is an artist who has also participated in the Dog Teapots Exhibition. He graduated from the Saint Petersburg Academy of Applied Arts in Russia in 1971. Being trained in painting and ceramics, he continues his work as a versatile artist. Working at the Ukraine Art and Design Company, he has implemented many different projects for both indoor and outdoor spaces. While continuing his work in various fields of art and materials, the artist has curated collections for personal exhibitions in art museums in Latvia, Ukraine, exhibition halls in France and Spain. His works are housed in the Applied Arts Museum in Latvia,

the Porcelain Museum in Latvia, the Ukraine Art Foundation, and the Sevastopol Art Museum. Additionally, he has received numerous awards and is a member of the Latvian and Ukrainian Artists' Union (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019).



Fig. 117: Anatolii Borodkin, Ukraine, The Rooster / Chicken Teapots 2017 Exhibition.
Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Dog

The Dog occupies the eleventh position in the 12-year cycle of the Chinese zodiac. The years of the Dog are 1994, 2006 and 2018. Dogs are considered the best friends of humans, capable of understanding the human soul and obedient to their masters, whether rich or not. Chinese tradition regards them as auspicious animals, and the arrival of a dog into a home is seen as a sign of prosperity to come. In Chinese legend, the invincible God Erlang has a loyal dog to help him catch monsters. The most prominent traits of dogs are loyalty and honesty. People born under this sign tend to be cautious by nature, which means it may take a long time to form new friendships. However, once they accept a friend, they are exceptionally loyal and supportive. Those born under the sign of the dog are known as loyal friends, honest lovers, and reliable family members (Travel China Guide, 2024).

Participating artists in the Dog Teapots Exhibition of 2018 include Sarah Michael (**Fig. 118**), Urmas Puhkan (**Fig. 119**), Kulli Koiv (**Fig. 120**), Eugenia Loginova (**Fig. 121**), Jan Lastovicka (**Fig. 122**), Jiri Lastovicka (**Fig. 123**), Marco Malavolti (**Fig. 124**), Melissa and Inguna (**Fig. 125**), Ruta Sipalyte (**Fig. 126**), Elena Yurkovich (**Fig. 127**), Anatolii Borodkin (**Fig. 128**), Jazmin Soto (**Fig. 129**), Can Gokçe, Ezgi Gokçe, Fidan Tonza (**Fig. 130**), İsmet Yüksel (**Fig. 131**), Oya Asan Yüksel (**Fig. 132**), Mary Holley, Antonella Cimatti, Lennart Eisenhart, Hwang Jeng-daw (**Fig. 133**) and Sandra Black.



Fig. 118: Sarah Michael, from The Netherlands, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 119: Urmas Puhkan, from Estonia, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 120: Kulli Koiv, from Estonia, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 121: Eugenia Loginova, from Latvia, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 122: Jan Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 123: Jiri Lastovicka, from Czech Republic, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 124: Marco Malavolti, from Italy, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 125: Melissa and Inguna, Lithuania, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 126: Ruta Sipalyte, Lithuania, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 127: Elena Yurkovich, from Russia, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 128: Anatolii Borodkin, from Ukraine, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 129: Jazmin Soto, from Mexican, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

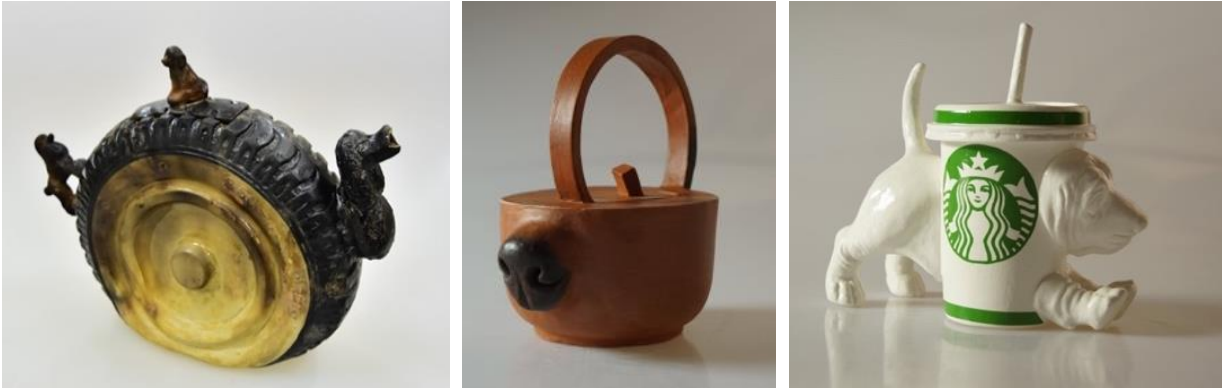


Fig. 130: Fidan Tonza, from Turkey, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 131: İsmet Yüksel, from Turkey, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Fig. 132: Oya Asan Yüksel, from Turkey, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 133: Hwang Jeng-daw, from Taiwan, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

The artist Sandra Black (**Fig. 134**) participated in the Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition as well as in the Snake, Horse, Dragon, and Rabbit Teapots exhibitions. Born in 1950, Sandra Black completed her undergraduate education in Art Education at Curtin University of Technology in Western Australia (Mutual Art (n.d.)). Working with porcelain since around 1976, the artist emphasizes her use of porcelain in her work due to its characteristics such as translucency, hardness, ability to carry color, and fine surface for carving and piercing. Describing porcelain as a sensory material both in the making process and in touch, Black emphasizes its purity and presence compared to other clays. She has held 29 solo exhibitions in Australia, New Zealand, the USA, and Germany, and has participated in over 170 invited exhibitions and competitions in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Hong Kong, Switzerland, Japan, Singapore, Germany, the Netherlands, and the UK. Her works are included in public and private collections worldwide (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019).



Fig. 134: Sandra Black, from Australia, The Dog Teapots 2018 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Year of The Pig

Pig, the twelfth position in the 12 year cycle of Chinese zodiac signs. The years of the Pig are; 1983, 1995, 2007 and 2019. As the final sign of the Chinese zodiac, the pig represents wealth and good fortune from ancient times. It is gentle, with no intention of harming others, and can bring prosperity to people. Physically, pigs are often loved by people for their chubby faces and large ears. However, in China, the pig is sometimes

not considered a clever animal because its love for sleep and food can be seen as representing laziness and clumsiness due to its tendency to become overweight (TravelChinaGuide, 2024).

The artists participating in the Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition are: George McCauley (**Fig. 135**), Hennie Meyer (**Fig. 136**), Kadri Parnamets (**Fig. 137**), Jeroen Bechtold (**Fig. 138**), Rafael Navas (**Fig. 139**), Ruta Sipalyte (**Fig. 140**), Xu Qu (**Fig. 141**), Ken Shipley (**Fig. 142**) Hwang Jeng-daw (**Fig.143**), and Jiri Lastovicka.



Fig. 135: George McCauley, from USA, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition

Fig. 136: Hennie Meyer, from South Africa, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition

Fig. 137: Kadri Parnamets, from Estonia, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 138: Jeroen Bechtold, from The Netherlands, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition

Fig. 139: Rafael Navas, from Spain, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 140: Ruta Sipalyte, from Lithuania, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.



Fig. 141: Xu Qu, from China, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition.

Fig. 142: Ken Shipley, from USA, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

Born in 1949, Jiri Lastovicka has participated in the Pig Teapots Exhibition (**Fig. 144**) as well as in the Rat, Tiger, Dragon, Rabbit, Sheep, Dog and Horse Teapot Exhibitions. Working as a sculptor and designer from Prague, he primarily focuses on porcelain and industrial design. After graduating from the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague in 1974, he began his career as a designer at the Lesov Development Center. From 1981 to 1992, he worked at the Institute of Housing and Clothing Culture in Prague while continuing his work at a porcelain manufacturer in Karlovy Vary. Since 1992, Jiri Lastovicka has been working as a designer at Porcela Plus. As a sculptor, he mainly focuses on figurative porcelain sculptures. With over 30 years of experience in porcelain design, his porcelain sets are produced by Thun Karlovarsky Porcelan. He has been a member of the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC) since 1998. Many of his works have received awards from the Czech Design Center. His works have been exhibited both in the Czech Republic and abroad (Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019).



Fig. 143: Hwang Jeng-daw, from Taiwan, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition.

Fig. 144: Jiri Lastovicka, Czech Republic, The Pig Teapots 2019 Exhibition.

Source: Archive of Hwang Jeng-daw 2008- 2019.

RESULTS AND EVALUATIONS

The Chinese Zodiac, rooted in ancient beliefs and cultural practices, continues to influence contemporary society, shaping perceptions of personality traits and guiding future plans. Originating from the rich tapestry of Chinese culture, the Twelve Animal Calendar reflects the intricate interplay between celestial events and human affairs.

While scholarly debates persist regarding its precise origins, the Chinese Zodiac remains deeply ingrained in Chinese traditions, particularly evident in the vibrant celebrations of the Chinese New Year. This annual festival, marked by colorful parades, traditional performances, and family gatherings, serves as a testament to the enduring significance of the Twelve Animal Calendar in Chinese society.

The artistic exploration of animal themes stretches back through the annals of history, from prehistoric cave paintings to modern-day masterpieces. Animals, with their symbolic significance and innate beauty, have long captured the imagination of artists and inspired creative expression across cultures.

Within the realm of Chinese art and culture, the Twelve Animal Calendar has provided a rich source of inspiration for contemporary artists seeking to explore themes of identity, spirituality, and cultural heritage. Through their works, these artists reinterpret traditional motifs and infuse them with new meanings, bridging the gap between past and present.

The Twelve Animal-themed Teapot Exhibitions, conceived by visionary curator and artist Jeng-daw, stand as a testament to the enduring relevance of the Chinese Zodiac in contemporary art. Beginning with the inaugural Rat Teapot Exhibition in 2008 and culminating with the Pig Teapot Exhibition in 2019, these exhibitions have showcased the creativity and ingenuity of artists from around the world.

By integrating the symbolism of the Chinese Zodiac into their ceramic teapot designs, these artists have contributed to a rich tapestry of cultural exchange and artistic innovation. Each teapot serves as a unique expression of the animal associated with its corresponding year, capturing the essence of Chinese folklore and tradition.

Through their participation in the Twelve Animal-themed Teapot Exhibitions, artists have not only celebrated the timeless allure of the Chinese Zodiac but also fostered greater cultural understanding and appreciation. These exhibitions serve as a reminder of the enduring power of art to transcend cultural boundaries and unite people in celebration of shared heritage.

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