

TESSY PETTYJOHN





In her art and beyond, Tessy Pettyjohn is looking for tranquility. With "A Light in Everything," her second solo exhibition at Silverlens Gallery, Pettyjohn unveils a new series of sculptural clay works with the intention of illuminating forms seen only during the act of meditation, a practice that has long informed her art making process, from concept to creation.

Meditation is often thought of as an individual exercise, aimed at boosting one's awareness of the self. To Pettyjohn, it is anything but. Meditation can just as easily bring one closer to others, those in one's life or those never met, breaking down the divisions that only appear to separate us and highlighting the connections we share. By doing so, it strengthens those connections and creates new possibilities. When enough people bend the singular focus of their minds to a collective goal or desire, namely the proliferation of peace and the cessation of suffering, it can make a tangible difference in the world.

Recalling her own meditative visions of bold luminous colors without shapes to contain them and ideas that transcend any words to articulate them, Pettyjohn's process operates on an intuitive and tactile level rather than a cerebral one and relies on reaching a mindset that – similar to a walk among the herbs, fruit trees, and wild plants of her garden at home – involves a stillness and introspection that can only be found when she is alone.

As one among the vanguard of pottery's resurgence in the Philippines, Pettyjohn has championed the preservation of traditional firing techniques along with mindfully sourced clays and glazes from across the country. Years spent teaching her craft to countless students, along with residencies in China and Japan, not only firmly embedded her as a member of an artistic community, but it also gave her a firsthand view of the diversity and innovation that springs from a medium she had helped to reestablish. Al the while, Pettyjohn's personal aesthetic has evolved into a visual language that is distinctly her own.

Building upon her earlier geometric works, Pettyjohn began experimenting with more organic forms with her exhibition titled *Cornucopia* in 2010. Motivated by experiences such as snorkeling in Palawan or her general passion for nature's raw beauty, she employed contrasting textures and patterns to create the appearance of living objects reminiscent of corals, algae, and plants. Intricately fashioned through the rhythmic and repetitive movements of her fingers, iterative gestures gather and merge as cohesive patterns that blossom into natural forms.

Subsequent explorations of this style in the exhibitions Aianthous (2013) and My Garden (2014) found the artist further populating her high-fired ecosystem with even more unique flora. Most recently, in 2019's Continuous Growth, the artist presented the structures as interjections to seemingly uninhabitable contexts, jutting from blocks of stone or ancient-looking arches, further mining a theme involving the business of living itself; the way it sprouts and spreads with quiet tenacity.

Now, in works titled "Radiance," Pettyjohn's ceramic organisms no longer jut or interject. They stand fully emerged but they are not alone. Whereas some of the shapes are familiar, occurring previously in isolation or as an outgrowth of another structure, each piece is now a community in itself, with many varied components affixed to a circular base. Although no two features are identical and the glazes produce colors ranging from grounded whites and blues to striking greens and reds, there is harmony in each assemblage. These hybrid constituents, delicately molded and layered, inhabit a fertile realm and are nourished by the sensitivity of their portrayal. More than ever, the effect of these configurations suggests the cups, bulbs, and fronds so often found in nature; practical formations for collecting water and catching the light. Without a direct lineage to any known species in nature, these pieces become singular and self-evident manifestations of the unnamed, quiet light that can be found all around, if you look for it.













For the Birds and the Bees 2, 2024 high fired stoneware and porcelain $21\,1/2\times16$ in | 54.6×40.6 cm













Radiance 6, 2023 high fired stoneware and porcelain $24 \times 24 \times 41/2$ in | $61 \times 61 \times 11.4$ cm

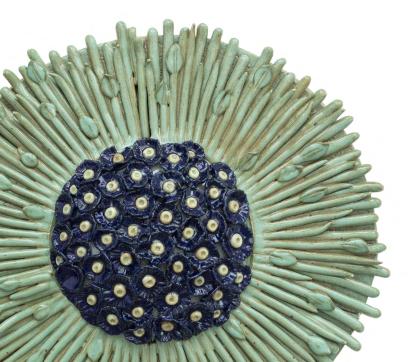


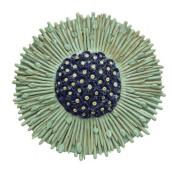


**Radiance 2, 2023 high fired stoneware and porcelain $20 \times 20 \times 4$ in | $50.8 \times 50.8 \times 10.2$ cm









Radiance 1, 2023 high fired stoneware and porcelain $17\ 1/2 \times 17\ 1/2 \times 3\ 1/2$ in | $44.5 \times 44.5 \times 8.9$ cm











Radiance 5, 2023 high fired stoneware and porcelain $24 \times 24 \times 4$ in | 61 \times 61 \times 10.2 cm





Radiance 3, 2023 high fired stoneware and porcelain $18 \times 18 \times 4$ in | $45.7 \times 45.7 \times 10.2$ cm













Radiance 4, 2023 high fired stoneware and porcelain $24 \times 24 \times 5$ in | 61 \times 61 \times 12.7 cm









From The Desert 1, 2019 stoneware and porcelain 40.0h x 9.0w in | 101.6h x 22.86w cm









From The Desert 3, 2019 stoneware and porcelain 38.0h x 9.0w in | 96.52h x 22.86w cm











Bloom Field, 2024 high fired stoneware and porcelain dimensions variable







SILVERLENS www.silverlensgalleries.com

TESSY PETTYJOHN

Tessy Pettyjohn is a renowned pioneer of Philippine pottery, clay art, and sculpture. Starting her craft in the late 1970s, she has had many shows both here and abroad in her long career. Although she has retired from teaching, she now concentrates on doing her own work for exhibits at her Laguna workshop studio. She continues to explore the use of indigenous Philippine clays, pigments, and minerals for making high fire ceramics and glazes.

Tessy and her husband Jon are at the forefront of ceramic arts in the Philippines. They have developed over many years, masterpieces, which focus heavily on the use of uniquely Filipino materials.



TESSY PETTYJOHN

b. 1948, Manila, PH



TP2 Covered Jar, 2018

AWARDS

1974 1st Prize Awardee Furniture Design Competition, Design Center of the Philippines

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2024	A Light In Everything, Silverlens, manila
2019	Continuing Growth, Silverlens, Manila
2014	My Garden, Art Informal, Manila
2013	Aianthous, Art Informal, Manila
2010	Cornucopia, Izukan Gallery, Manila
2001	Solo exhibition, Izukan Gallery, Manila
1996	Solo exhibition, Hiraya Gallery, Manila

TWO PERSON EXHIBITIONS

2015	Touch Me, Touch Me Not, Silverlens, Manila
2011	Clay Life, with Jon Pettyjohn, Alliance Francaise, Manila
2010	Curved Space, Art Informal, with Jon Pettyjohn, Manila
2009	Juxtapots, with Jon Pettyjohn, Alliance Francaise, Manila
2002	<i>Home is Where the Art Is,</i> with Jon Pettyjohn, Glorietta Art Space, Manila
1991	<i>With Jon Pettyjohn</i> , Hiraya Gallery, Manila

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2019	Art Fair Philippines, Silverlens, Manila
	Watchfire, Silverlens, Manila
2018	Art Fair Philippines, Manila
2016	Art Fair Philippines, Manila
2009	Ring of Fire: First Exhibition of Contemporary Southeast Asian Ceramics, Ayala Museum, Manila
2007	<i>Mitsubitsuki</i> , Japanese Images/Thematics in Philippine Art. Metropolitan Museum, Manila



TESSY PETTYJOHN CV

2004	With Shozo Michikawa and Jon Pettyjohn , Isouain Gallery, Okazaki, Japan
2003	<i>Putik</i> , Pinto Gallery, Antipolo
2001	<i>Philippine Anagama Project</i> , Vargas Museum, University of the Philippines
1997	Potters of Pansol, Glorietta Art Space, Makati
1986	An Exhibition of Contemporary Philippine Pottery, Design Center of the Philippines
1983	Clay, Philippine Pottery Today, Design Center of the Philippines
1975	Potter's Guild, Design Center of the Philippines
1975	Enamelled Jewelry, Red Gallery

EDUCATION

1965 - 1969	BS Fine Arts, Painting Major, University of the Philippines
1968 - 1969	Ceramic art with Ramirez, University of the Philippines
1969 - 1970	Interior Design, Philippine School of Interior Design
1971	Interior Design, New York School of Interior Design
1971 - 1972	Ceramics, New School for Social Research, New York, USA

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MATT JONES

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