



Natapong Prompingsaton

## On the Way ! - The Silpakorn Clay Works Sanam Chandra 2022

### International Raku Sculpture Festival

*Youthful energy meets international experience*

HEIDE ZAVACZKI

Even ceramists only live once, they get older and at some point have to ask themselves where to find flourishing offspring in the ceramics trade and the art that goes with it.

It can ungrudgingly be acknowledged that the future of the craft is being well

prepared at 5 Thai universities. The Silpakorn Clay Works International Raku Symposium in Sanam Chandra has the appropriate manpower. Behind it is Sayumporn Kasornsuwan, the vice-president of the university, who spared no effort in organizing the 12-day event with 80 national

and international ceramists in a comprehensive and inspiring way.

A tightly knit programme of practical work and presentations alternated with cultural excursions to explore the host country.

German ceramic artist, B.-J. Zavaczki attended and was delighted to deepen his acquaintance with Thatree Muangkaew from Bangkok.

Zavaczki was attending the symposium near Bangkok for the second time. It does not always take place at the same location and in 2022 it was in Sanam Chandra near the Institute of Ceramics where Muangkaew teaches.

The ceramics department of the university there is simply impressive with its the kiln hall and an outdoor area that offers students space to develop their ideas covering a range of creative diversity.

“The threads come together in Muangkaew’s hands; he dedicatedly manages everything to do with organizing the workplaces of the international ceramists, transporting the works, planning and carrying out the raku firing,”

Reinhard Keitel



reports Zavaczki. It is amazing how smoothly the communication works and the cordial relationship between professors and their students is impressive.

It shows freshness in work and entertainment – parties with live sessions, karaoke on the Chao Praya river. It is presented in an unconventional way, because working with ceramics is a process that is taken from the home studio and projected into the public realm. Of course, the working conditions are not ideal for every technique and some artists have to leave their comfort zone.

But help is at hand, a matter of course here – like on an ant trail, there are always helping hands where they are needed and the students are indispensable. When the ovens are opened, spontaneous happenings often occur. "The communication was spot on!" B.J.Z. comments: "There's something magical about it."

There are discussions about drying processes, exchanges about firing curves and smoking techniques. Raku is a field that invites experimentation and different cultural backgrounds are compared. This is shown by the

diverse results of the artists on the sculpture path.

The question of young people has been on my mind for a long time and then I look to Thailand and wish for a spark of the same practical orientation for our schools and universities and funding that creates these opportunities.

Ceramics needs enthusiasts, enthusiasm always arises when ceramics and its possibilities are celebrated.

There is a lack of concepts in Germany that are aimed at a broader public, that attract families with children as an audience and involve young people. Get out of the dust and pernickiteness, and follow the Asian model. Although we shouldn't forget that in England, France and Italy the format of the ceramics festival is also cultivated and well received.

In short, it would also do us Central European ceramists good not only to look to the educated, solvent public, but also to inspire young people and families.

We should set out to do this, even starting in schools and laying the foundations today for a new generation of ceramists and ceramic artists!

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B.-J. Zavaczki



Gopal Shrestha, Nepal

First firing ceremony

