

8 August 2018



Portage Ceramic Awards 2018 judge Bari Ziperstein and her work *Propaganda Pots*, Nino Mier Gallery, 2018

## Los Angeles artist to judge 2018 national pottery awards

This year's Portage Ceramic Awards, Aotearoa's best-known survey of contemporary ceramic activity, will be judged by American artist Bari Ziperstein. Ziperstein is at the forefront of a thriving ceramic scene in Los Angeles. As well as gallery-based exhibitions and site-specific public installations, Ziperstein also produces functional ceramics through her company, BZippy & Co.

Ziperstein will select finalists and winners for this prestigious event, organised and hosted each year by Te Uru in Titirangi with support from The Trusts Community Foundation.

"We are excited about bringing a judge across the Pacific, from the American West Coast to Auckland's West Coast," says Te Uru Director, Andrew Clifford.

"Although Auckland has many close ties with Los Angeles, this is the first time the Portage Ceramic Awards have had a judge from California. This is an excellent opportunity to acknowledge the important history of artists working with clay from that region, and the lively Los Angeles scene that has become an important centre for the current ceramic revival. So, we are grateful for the assistance of Ceramics NZ for their assistance in selecting this year's judge."

Working in different media and formats, Ziperstein's work is focused on experimenting with ceramic materials but also has a strong conceptual dimension that addresses politics, propaganda and consumerism. She has been described as working at the crossroads of traditional craft, feminist critique, conceptual theory and historical research.

"Using the material and history of clay as a means to tap into a political narrative is of utmost interest," says Ziperstein. "A part of my practice is driven by the classic vessel silhouette - but as a means to infuse the works with more problematic content, like carved images of 1980s propaganda from the Soviet Union about alcoholism, being a good mother, and being a good worker."

Ziperstein was included in a 2017 Artsy article as one of the 20 artists "shaping the future of ceramics." She received a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a certificate in Women's Studies from the Ohio University in 2000, and a Master of Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts in 2004. For a decade she taught and ran workshops for children and adults in community and academic environments, including as Visiting Assistant Professor in sculpture at the University of California at Riverside. From 2007-11 she was a board-member for Pasadena youth-focused artist-run organisation, Side Street Projects.

"I'm thrilled to engage with the thriving international ceramic community in New Zealand for the Portage Ceramic Awards," she says. "What an honour to explore and understand a community through its relationship to clay."

The fresh insights offered by each year's judge has been a signature of the awards since its inception. It is important for the vitality of the scene that it continues to reassess its own ideas and assumptions with diverse perspectives coming from as far and wide as possible, whether that be Jingdezhen, Wales, Sydney or Whanganui.

Established in 2001, the Portage Ceramic Awards is a hallmark event for the New Zealand ceramics community, showcasing some of the best work currently being made, and serving as a platform for dialogue about developments in the ceramics field.

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Entries are now closed for the Portage Ceramic Awards 2018. The selection of finalist works for the awards is a two-stage process. Approximately sixty works will be chosen by judge Bari Ziperstein from submitted photographs. Shortlisted artists will be invited to send their works to Te Uru for final selection, where the judge will confirm the award winners and works for the exhibition.

The Awards' finalists will be announced on 27 October.

The Premier Award winner and Merit Award winners will be announced at a ceremony to be held at Te Uru Waitākere Contemporary Gallery in Titirangi, West Auckland on Thursday 8 November.

The finalist works will be exhibited at Te Uru from 9 November 2018 – February 2019.

More information about the awards can be found at [www.teuru.org.nz/portage](http://www.teuru.org.nz/portage)

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Exhibition view of *Propaganda Pots* by Portage Ceramic Awards 2018 judge Bari Ziperstein, Nino Mier Gallery, 2018

## **About Bari Ziperstein:**

Bari Ziperstein is an artist based in Los Angeles, California. Working in mixed media sculpture, Ziperstein's primary focus is in ceramics. Her plural and fluid practice includes discrete objects, large-scale installation, site-specific public sculpture, and her line of functional ceramics, BZippy & Co. Materially experimental but conceptual at its core, Bari's practice engages ideas of consumerism, propaganda, and the built environment. Her objects and sculptural tableaux reflect her interest in the political dimensions of capitalist economies and challenge the construction of desire and aspiration in contemporary American culture through a historical lens.

Bari Ziperstein was born in 1978 in Chicago, IL and lives in Los Angeles, CA. She received a Master of Fine Arts from the California Institute of the Arts, Valencia, CA in 2004 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts with a certificate in Women's Studies from Ohio University, Athens, OH in 2000. One-person exhibitions of her work have been presented at Bethel University, Minneapolis, MN (2018); Museum of Art, Architecture, and Design, Santa Barbara, CA (2017); Wignall Museum of Contemporary Art, Rancho Cucamonga, CA (2010); Long Beach City College Project Space, Long Beach, CA (2009); The Harris Art Gallery, University of La Verne, La Verne, CA (2007); and the San Francisco Arts Commission, San Francisco, CA (2005).

Her work has been included in thematic exhibitions such as *All Hands on Deck*, Ben Maltz Gallery, Otis College of Art & Design, Los Angeles, CA (2018); *Making It Work: Production by Design*, American Museum of Ceramic Art, Pomona, CA (2018); *Corporeal Impulse*, Vincent Price Art Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2015); *Interior Forest*, 18th Street Projects, Santa Monica, CA (2013); *The Open Daybook*, Los Angeles Contemporary Exhibitions, Los Angeles, CA (2011); *Drama of the Gifted Child: The Five Year Plan*, Armory Center for the Arts, Pasadena, CA (2009); *Truthiness: Photography as Sculpture*, California Museum of Photography, Riverside, CA (2008); *Multiple Vantage Points: Southern California Women Artists, 1980-2006*, Los Angeles Municipal Art Gallery, Los Angeles, CA (2007); and *Pareidolia*, Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, Santa Ana, CA (2004).

Bari has been recognized by grant-making organisations such as the Los Angeles County Arts Commission, Los Angeles, CA (2013); Center for Cultural Innovation, Los Angeles, CA (2012); Philip and Muriel Berman Foundation, Los Angeles, CA (2011); Arts Council of Long Beach, Long Beach, CA (2011); and the City of Pasadena Department of Cultural Affairs, Pasadena, CA (2010) and has been awarded residencies such as Anderson Ranch, Snowmass Village, CO (2012) and the Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT (2001).

### **About the Portage Ceramic Awards:**

Established in 2001, the annual Portage Ceramic Awards are Aotearoa-New Zealand's best-known survey of contemporary ceramic activity. Administered by Te Uru Waitākere Contemporary Gallery with support from The Trusts Community Foundation, the awards are a hallmark event for the New Zealand ceramics community, showcasing some of the best work currently being made, and serving as a platform for dialogue about developments in the ceramics field. The awards are open to all New Zealand artists and are a key outlet for new work and new voices.

The Premier Portage Ceramic Award carries a prize of \$15,000. Up to three Merit Awards totaling \$3,000 are also on offer, and a People's Choice Award is announced at the exhibition's conclusion. The overall winners will be announced at a ceremony to be held at Te Uru on 8 November 2018.

### **About Te Uru:**

Te Uru Waitākere Contemporary Gallery, based in scenic Titirangi, is West Auckland's regional gallery. Te Uru is an institution locally rooted in West Auckland but globally minded. As a destination gallery, Te Uru operates from an award-winning purpose-built building, which opened in November 2014 as part of the redeveloped Lopdell Precinct. The gallery originally began in 1986 as the Waitemata City Arts and Cultural centre, later known as Lopdell House Gallery, sited in the adjacent historic Lopdell House building in the heart of Titirangi, gateway to the Waitākere rain forest and en route to Auckland's famous west coast beaches. Te Uru receives core funding from the Waitākere Ranges Local Board of Auckland Council.