

SUJI PARK

TEACHERS' RESOURCE



ABOUT THE ARTIST

Suji Park is a New Zealand and Korean ceramic sculptor and artist. She was born in South Korea and moved to Aotearoa New Zealand in the late 1990s with her family when she was 12. She has an MFA from the Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland (2013) and was the McCahon House artist in residence (2015). She has exhibited across Aotearoa New Zealand and internationally. In 2016, Park returned to South Korea and in 2018, she began a Masters in Creative Writing from the Korea National University of Arts. In 2022, she completed a year-long artist residency at the Factory of Contemporary Arts in Palbok, Jeonju.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

'Noise Collector' is Suji Park's solo exhibition of clay-based sculpture. Most of the work has come all the way from Jeonju, South Korea, where Suji Park is currently based.

Suji Park's style of working is about bringing together different kinds of clay (paper clay, fired clay or epoxy clay) and figuring out how they will physically combine and sit together, and how to try to fire them. She will add found objects, sometimes she will break works and put them back together in a new way or combine them with other works. She uses many variations of glazes and pigments and does multiple firings. Sometimes

she will exhibit works and continue to develop them further afterwards (as was the case with many of the Feverhead busts in this exhibition). This process of finding connection points between how materials behave and embracing the unknown reflect on how her experiences in life have influenced her way of thinking. In the case of this show, she has been mulling over the fragmentation of language, people and families that occur with migration—and her own migration between South Korea and New Zealand.

'I'm Korean but I'm not Korean. I am a New Zealander but I'm not a New Zealander. Am I in between? Am I a combination of things? I've realised it's much bigger than that. Everyone is multidimensional.'

Suji Park also experiences a form of synaesthesia, often describing sounds, words or movements having colour, texture or forms, which she thinks has developed alongside her interest in ways of communicating over and above verbal language.

'Often I think of myself as a listener of my work, where materials or modes of working are like different languages. I speak and think in a few different languages, but these are broken and fragmented. The limitations I encounter when using new materials are like physical translations of my experience of language. In making my work, these experiences become something I can touch.'



ART TERMS

Ceramic- made of clay (gluey mud) and permanently hardened by heat.

Ceramic Glaze- a glasslike substance applied to a clay object by spraying, painting or dipping to create a shiny coating. This also makes the object waterproof when fired by heat.

Pigment- A substance that gives colour to other materials such as paint. For example, crushing the mineral lapis lazuli into powder to make blue paint.

Form- used to describe the shape of objects that are 3-dimensional and the space they occupy.

Texture- the feel or appearance of a surface or substance.

Vessel- a hollow utensil (such as a cup or bowl) for holding something.

Bust- a sculpture of the upper part of the human figure including the head, neck and usually part of the shoulders.

Figurative- any form of art that shows a strong likeness to the real world and particularly to the human figure.

Abstract- art that does not look like real life but instead uses shapes, colours, forms and gestural marks to achieve its effect.

PRE-VISIT ACTIVITY

Identity and belonging

FIND out if any classmates have immigrated to New Zealand. Interview them to find out what their experience was like. Did they have to learn a new language? Did things smell or sound different? How did it make them feel?

IMAGINE if you had to move to an alien world. What would you bring with you? What would you leave behind? What would you want to share about yourself if you made a new friend?

POST-VISIT ACTIVITY

CREATE a creature bust from clay. Use wire, tape, cardboard, anything you can find to make an armature. Then add clay on top to make the form. Look around you, what can you use for eyes, teeth, horns...

EXPLORE texture, grab objects you can find in your everyday life, see what texture they can make when you roll them in paint and make marks on paper or embed them in playdough.

EXERCISE make a sculpture from any material. When finished, get a friend to break it. Then with the broken pieces make a new sculpture.

SUJI PARK, BEATDOL III, 2022. FIRED CLAY, PAPER CLAY, GLAZE, RESIN, ACRYLIC PAINT, LED LIGHTS, PLASTIC, FOAM. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

SUJI PARK, FEVERHEAD, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

SUJI PARK, THE NIGHT, 2022, FIRED CLAY, CERAMIC PAINT, EPOXY CLAY, COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

FURTHER READING:

- <https://artcollector.net.au/suji-park-looking-back-and-looking-forward>
- <https://artistprofile.com.au/suji-park/>

