

VESSEL GALLERY

LONDON



Vivienne Foley (United Kingdom 1944 -)

Black Bird

'Black Bird' is a unique porcelain sculptural vessel by the British artist, Vivienne Foley.

Taking her inspiration from Chinese ceramics, Foley works the notoriously difficult porcelain clay into elegant and sensitive forms. Her grasp of sculptural composition is evident in both the positive and negative spaces created by her works which stand out both singularly and grouped together to form still lives.

In her own words:

“As a professional potter I have been producing thrown porcelains for over fifty years and so logic would dictate that I have ‘seen it all, done it all’ by now, but on the contrary I still continue to be challenged and interested. The technical frustrations and the uncertainty of results all seem worthwhile when one opens a successful kiln firing.

The heart leaps! I am not influenced by any particular thing – rather, I am interested in everything; always looking for quality and workmanship. I love all aspects of the design world from architecture to textiles. Museums, galleries and exhibitions are my addiction, with photography and the natural world a constant inspiration”

The artist can also create pieces to commission, please contact the gallery for further information.

Artist description:

Vivienne Foley is based in Gloucestershire where she produces exquisite ceramic sculpture. Although in essence they are often functional pieces in form, it is their appearance that makes each unique work so much more. From dramatic structures to gentle sweeping curves, Foley's inherent understanding of porcelain is more than evident and testament to her patience with this most difficult of materials.

Having worked with porcelain for over 5 decades, it is Foley's dedication that gives her such sensitivity towards her medium. This commitment combined with her expert glazing and acknowledgment of this material's vast history, results in very fresh and modern works that equally pay homage to what has gone before. Flower forms, poppy heads, bracts and petals translate into foliate rims and sinuous necks, carved and pleated or swept into a spiral. A contemporary marriage of craft, history and nature.

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I have never been afraid to push my materials to the limit, to accept failures and to follow trails, but I am always excited when basic techniques and familiar methods result in something new. My primary interest is in ‘form’ and in finding solutions for what I call ‘damp engineering’. The comparatively non-plastic nature of porcelain dictates my having to join sections together, but a form must ‘flow’ and construction methods should not be obvious.

Over the years I have fired every sort of kiln and dallied with glazes, spending untold hours testing and rejecting, but since I now work in a small space I find simple black and white glazes and slips are less distracting and best enhance my forms.

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My travels to China and my ongoing study of Chinese ceramics have also been an enduring theme and I have been lucky enough to handle and photograph some of the world's great collections.”

Foley has a global following and is represented in private and public collections world wide.