

# “Artists and people who influenced me the most in my artistic career.”

By Alejandrina Cappadoro (Argentina)

Alejandrina Cappadoro understands that art is not a hard science, so it is difficult if not impossible to quantify who or what has given rise to her ceramic work and her career. In her work she shows her land - the ravines of the Parana River in Argentina -, the contact with the big city, Buenos Aires, trips, the great impact of Asia's culture, art and people, her job as a teacher in her workshop and in a Teacher Training Public College. Within these weak margins she considers the Argentinian ceramist Leo Tavelle and the Argentinian ceramist Vilma Villaverde as the teachers who deeply influenced her work.

## 1.1. LEO TAVELLA



Tortured



Figure



Figure



Faces

Leo Tavella's mark on Alejandrina Cappadoro's formation and production is remarkable. Cappadoro considers Tavella as a model of artist: lack of divism, total dedication to the workshop, talent to make art everything he has in his hands. These virtues in addition to his generosity in sharing his knowledge, legitimizes him as true teacher. With Leo Tavella, Cappadoro discovers the formal and conceptual aspects of large format ceramic sculpture. From this teacher she learns the lesson that all matter is potentially an art work when it is seen by an artist. The "heads", which distinguishes the greatest part of Cappadoro's production, has as reference this kind of work of Leo Tavella. Tavella is her referent at the time to enjoying the assembly of materials found with ceramic pieces. With Tavella she learnt that art work is not only a good combination of techniques properly applied, but a language that offers the viewer a field sowed of signs for decoding. This teacher influences in her work of human figuration processing with informalist bias, where form is diluted, as if matter would not be as it is. After meeting this artist, Cappadoro decided her life as ceramist.

## 1.2. Monitoring Leo Tavella's influence in Cappadoro's production.



"I understand", says Alejandrina Cappadoro, that the "heads" series, which distinguishes the greatest part of my production, answers conscious and welcome, to the influence of her teacher Tavella . In "Set Menu"(1) she proposed the challenge of an assembly of large pieces in raku technique, with one of them dominating the scene and introducing in the whole of a found object, the table. To carry out this work she tried, paradoxically, to trick the strength of ceramic material. This language is also related to painting and sculpture of Argentinian neo figuration, specially Juan Carlos Distefano's sculpture that impacted most of the Argentinian generation of that decade. In the piece "Head" (2) also raku and assembly, a distinctive feature of her work appears: the gender, the feminine outlined in gestures and small winks to the spectator, the figure with an insinuated smile that shows a peculiar characteristic, the longitudinality. With the piece two (3) the dualism of identity is proposed, what is believed, could be, or wanted to be and what it really is. As a sculpture the work proposes to give up the frontality to be offered as part of the entire package. The work "For follower and for faithful" (4) proposed as frontal, belongs to assembly series that is made from a found object (melt iron pipes) as raw material offering its concavity, with which it builds the opposition of ceramics sculptural forms. They interact with the solidity of iron. It is also visible in this series the opposition of the material found with the ceramics material, the subject with the object. In these pieces the masculine is expressed in frown and grief, in opposition to the fine irony of the gestures of feminine features.

## 2.1. VILMA VILLAVERDE

Cappadoro gets in the modeling of figure with live model together with Vilma Villaverde and this let her express herself along her career through different ways of figuration. She learnt how a teacher and a pupil organize and develop in a ceramics workshop. She acquired with Villaverde the skill in the technique and expression of sculptory pot and vessel. She also acquired the capacity and the taste for the assembled small size work that let her enjoy this genre that Cappadoro carries out together with sculptural figure along her career. As regard techniques, she developed all her knowledge on ceramics enamels with Villaverde. Today Cappadoro spreads this as one of the more significant instrument of her present production. Raku technique - that identifies most of Cappadoro's work - acquires a special place in the production of both. They worked many years together in Cappadoro's workshop. There they



Figure and boy



Oil Menina



I look at you



Lady of Wine

made a series of great size pieces, using this technique and shared a singular experience that made an important feedback at the time of analyzing the works achieved in that period. Between Vilma Villaverde and Alejandrina Cappadoro there is not only a teacher/pupil relationship. With the time they made a bond of friendship, sharing workshops, institutional projects, conferences, exhibitions, congresses and the membership in International Associations. Cappadoro understands that both Leo Tavella and Vilma Villaverde were fundamental in the gestation of her life as ceramist and that they impacted in great part her artistic development.

## 2.2. Monitoring of Vilma Villaverde's influence in Alejandrina Cappadoro.



Teapot



Girl



Personal toast



Red Heels of Mrs..

“Teapot”, is a piece of small size that is registered into the ironical climate of the assembly that is related to Villaverde in a semantic way as well as in the use of the raku. Pieces 1-2-3 and 4 show how in Cappadoro the irony is also nourished by a restrained and sensual femininity. The genre identity appears here and today it distinguishes her production. “Girl” and “Personal toast” (2) and (3) are works where the monumental processing of the same shape can be referred to Villaverde’s work. Her work “Red heels of Mrs..” (4) is an important landmark at the time of analyzing critically Cappadoro’s production. It is a tradition in sculpture, the head and torso genre. Cappadoro dares to transmute that genre in these legs with red shoes. Surely this was born by the influence of Villaverde’s work but it makes clear how Cappadoro assumes her own character, her own irony and the always present fine parody of identity. The figuration of a pair of woman legs wearing her red shoes will be a fact she will repeat times and times again in her work. With the time the pupil assumes independence from her teachers. Cappadoro understands that in the way of art and the construction of an aesthetic language it is impossible or even harmful, the lack of feedback. Create is to combine information and the information nourish any ceramic dialect or any other artistic genre.

### 3. ALEJANDRINA CAPPADORO: Today.

In the first paragraph of this presentation Alejandrina Cappadoro said that art is not an exact science. From that place she reflects on her current production and what influences converge in the same. Trips to countries and cities - celebrated centers of ceramic production- and their subsequent contact with Ceramic and Contemporary Art Museums impacted in her need for openness to new possible discourses that will take place with the same tools and skill he forged with the mentioned teachers, with renewed discursive ideas of ceramic art, carrying her own work into new forms of expression whose influence does not have a name, but is the result of an open mind. Thus a shift is produced in her work to formal cromatic and of textures processing as a singular change toward a language that hints as conceptual.

#### 3.1. Alejandrina Cappadoro’s work with new syntactic and semantic elements in the production between 2001/2012.



The series "Ladies of St. Nicholas" (1.2 and 3) is designed as a set of large format. Here three new plastic elements appear: modeling of human figure is minimalist, the form is opened and leaves behind the weight of the package, the surface appears as such, underlined by dialogue, textured element in the power of brightness, color and line. There is in this present work a new dialogue: that between form and surface, with a speech entirely different to the contrasts of its previous assembly, where iron was combined with mud, clay, glass, transparency with opacity.



The pot "Summer" (1) is a piece where the transit to the surface processing combined with the form is evident and polychrome enamel work distinguishes a new era of Cappadoro. The two "teapots" (2 and 3) are also integrated to the aesthetics of the final stage of the production of this artist, because of the formal turn, textures and singularity of its design. Her work changes and opens into a language where both syntactic as semantic aspects have moved.

Those legs of a woman "Red Heels of Mrs.." (Ref. page 29, photo 4) were already part of a language that would consolidate over the years. "From another place", 2007 - being also the same thematic subject is taken away from the narrative character of his previous figuration and the same irony is presence. In the inverted leg assemblies, woman still present, the duality of materials, the naughtiness, but they are emblematic of another time, from a new production that has been nurtured by a speech less intimate and more minimalist, less figurative and more conceptual. This piece will be later the module of a set - a miniinstallation-in which Cappadoro incorporates the conceptual dimension of a theme that runs through her work: the play of opposites

In this installation we are witnessing what today bears witness to Cappadoro's work, a minimalist approach, and the repetition of a module, the fine irony that summarizes her work, the feminine and finally an opening towards conceptualism in that same way, different colour, translates a semantic scope to be decoded by a spectator of contemporary art.





With the footprint and the moral support of her teachers always present she builds a singular work that has gained autonomy and opens onto a horizon nourished from effluents impossible to name one by one.

\*The text is written in third person by Professor Susana Perez Tort, researcher and art critic, who does the analysis and critique of works of the mentioned artists.

[www.susanaperezort.com.ar](http://www.susanaperezort.com.ar)