

ADIL WRITER

Adil Writer is a Bombay architect-turned-potter, living his life between two Indian coasts, with a Masters of Architecture degree from the University of Houston, Texas. He returned to Bombay and worked as an architect and interior designer before taking a short break to study ceramics. The short break extended for over two years, after which Writer moved to Auroville, an international community in the forests of South India where he currently resides and is a partner at the Mandala Pottery. Here he strikes a fine balance between making 'delicious' functional tableware and his own sculptural studio ceramics, bringing with him twelve years of architectural experience.

Writer's CV reads like a travelogue, wanderlust is what he says takes him across the world for invited residencies, workshops and exhibitions. His ceramics and large-scale paintings have been showcased at several solo and group exhibitions in Japan, China, India, Indonesia, Australia, Estonia, France and USA. In 2013, Writer was instrumental in arranging a residency for a group of 18 Indian ceramists to Fuping that led to their making works for the proposed Museum of Contemporary Indian Ceramics in China. Later in 2014, he organised a residency for another group in Korea. Adil says "Working away from one's studio has its advantages. Out of one's comfort zone, fresh ideas and methods of work goad the artist into new directions in work. It's at once intimidating, as well as refreshing."

Writer's architectural background keeps him interested in large-scale ceramic and unfired clay-on-canvas installations and murals, the most recent ones being a 60 feet long mural at a resort in Sri Lanka and the 35 feet long "Barcode" which has toured several galleries already. In 2011, at Shigaraki, one of the oldest kiln-sites in Japan, Adil culminated his three-month invited residency with a solo show titled "Himitsu Te Uso" (Secrets & Lies). His works from Shigaraki were later exhibited at Gallery Art & Soul, Mumbai in 2013 at a show titled "Secrets & Lies." Another residency in Bali culminated in a solo show "Shades of Grey," featuring Writer's ceramics and batik. He also featured in, "Six by Six: Interpreting Craft in Gondwana," a path-breaking Indo-Australian show at the Australian Triennial in Canberra featuring three Indian and three Australian ceramists.

About his forthcoming collection for Art Bengaluru 2016, Adil states, "Human beings have, through millennia, felt the necessity to document lives and times with a range of available media. Clay tablets used in Mesopotamia date back to the 3rd millennium, we know of Egyptian scrolls written in Hieratic, Roman and Greek scrolls on Papyrus, Chinese Bamboo Books, Tamil Palm Leaf manuscripts. Closer home in Bangalore, Arzoo Mistry's mysterious books made very much "her" way. Books made of any medium have an incredible connect with persons interacting with them. In 2011, I started making books out of clay during a three-month residency in Shigaraki, Japan. Small three-inch books, to large 1.5-meter sculptural book-

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shrines. The books I have made for Art Bengaluru 2016 are all made with a clay body prepared at my studio, Mandala Pottery in Auroville. Techniques of slipping and stretching slabs of clay give them the texture one sees on the book surfaces. The vapours of soda that these books are subsequently subjected to, highlight these textures. While it might be difficult to predict the future of the book in an era of fast-paced technological change, anxieties about the "death of books" have been expressed throughout the history of the medium, perceived as threatened by competing media such as Radio, Television, and the Internet. However, these views are generally exaggerated, and dominated by fetishism, fears about the end of humanism and ideas of techno-fundamentalist progress. To theorize that the Kindle and subsequent digital phenomena will do away with books altogether is far-fetched. I have exhibited ceramic books at several shows, titled "Secrets & Lies" in Japan, Bali and Bombay. Now here for Art Bengaluru, I have made ceramic books that may last millennia's. It will be interesting to know how aliens from another galaxy far, far away will react to these, when they come unearthen them soon."

