



A graduate in Visual Arts from Camberwell College of Art, **Kirti Chaudhary**'s chance introduction to clay during her early years of product design made her realise the immense expression, tactility the medium offered and she found herself drawn to the ceramic medium. She is currently practicing as a designer-maker in New Delhi.

# Tracing Time

*The force of nature is both powerful and beautiful at the same time. It shapes things and leaves behind its fingerprints, as if building on a work of art. Ceramic artist Kirti Chaudhary traces this artistry of time on a clay sculpture. She explains her insights and process.*



## Stroke of an idea.

Having spent a lot of time watching and observing a collection of rock-cut stones, which preserved the marks of nature and fossilised remains, the artist drew inspiration from the natural processes like erosion and changes through time and nature. The marks and traces left behind by these natural geological processes, a build up of sedimentary layers and patina over a passage of time gave way to a string of ideas. Fascinated by these varied forms left over the course of time, the objective became to evoke these ideas in the artwork.

## Understanding the canvas.

The area of interest lay in experimenting with the ceramic surface. Nature and the passage of time formed the core ideas. The surfaces, marks, textures, scratched, scraped or drawn by forces in nature tend to reveal hidden layers of narrative and offer a unique visual experience. At the same time, a personal story was instilled into the ceramic surfaces that reflect its creation and impart to it a sense of history.

## On the job.

The work involved a deliberate non-use of glaze in an attempt to achieve a more natural look and retain the surface quality of clay. By making use of cracks and fissures, natural and organic materials were incorporated that left its fingerprint in the clay. These marks were then layered with metallic oxides to bring out the textural quality of the surfaces and suggest ideas of weathering and traces left behind as remains or fossils. Alternative firing techniques like smoke pit firing and saggar firing were used in order to develop unique markings. The clay surface was subjected to various elements like heat, smoke, oxides and other combustible materials to develop marks and colour. Experiments with the markings of line and colour by wrapping the pots with salt soaked cloth, wire, organic material etc. were done. Also these surfaces with flashings of colour were an evidence of a literal passage of time during the smoke firing process, emphasising on the history of creation of each piece ←