



Cheerfulness and Good Humour – Seriously!

The works of **MIA BÖDDECKER**

by Annette Ody

Mia Böddecker is a master ceramist with a difference. The first thing you notice is her small figures, which she calls the DenkerBande – the “Gang of Thinkers”. They form a crowd of countless small human figures about 10 cm tall. They are a mixed bunch, black, white, red, yellow, big and small noses, thin, fat, skinny, portly, friendly, hostile, loving, sluggish, sad, lethargic, choleric, sanguine, well-fed, phlegmatic, melancholy, hungry, cheerful, jaunty, cheeky, funny, extravagant, shifty, scheming, sophisticated, acrobatic, upright and endearing.

The entire temperament of the world and of humanity is assembled here and is looking observers straight in the eye, small but all the more serious and resolute, if they dare to become involved with the small, sturdy figures made of ceramic with a shell on their heads. None of them appears twice.

Böddecker says, “These little creatures are able to take orders and to help us in all of our tasks and everyday difficulties. For instance, a single Thinker on our bedside table can take over our worries and ensure a good night’s sleep, in the garage or the key rack can remind us to concentrate when we drive or it can stop food going off in the fridge. Together, the Thinkers form a community that stands for both diversity and individuality. This is the prerequisite for dealing naturally and respectfully with our fellow humans and with nature.”

Inwardly emotional people always outwardly show a turbulent life in their work too. This is the case with Böddecker too in her work, which she calls “Multiple Personalities”. If you think this is only about fun, you would be mistaken. The figures really get down to basics. All human weaknesses are mercilessly revealed: mendacity, deceit, cheating, complacency, rumour mongering – they all get their just deserts from Böddecker with faces, figures and gestures that leave no doubt about their all-too-human intentions. Premature laughter may stick in your throat.





top - "Gang of Thinkers"
stoneware, pitfiring, raku,
woodfiring, shells

opposite, bottom - "Ewald"

right - "Markward"

Böddecker explains, "The Multiple personalities are built up layer by layer, growing from the unconscious, culminating in various subtle emotional states in the torsos of these dumpy figures. Their gestures and facial expressions express what has built up in secret."

But Böddecker also gives space to sweet, charming things too, and are shown in *Liebe* ("Love") or *Bettgeflüster* ("Pillow Talk"), or when she gives a name to the individual Thinkers: Leander, Sybille and Wolfram, Coletta and Marzella. Names like poems, there is no end to Böddecker's creations. Mia Böddecker learned her trade at the *Keramikschule Landshut* and qualified there as a master craftswoman, making her the youngest master in Lower Bavaria and the Upper Palatinate. She then trained as a mosaic layer in Italy and joined the artists group *Nerofumo* there.

The motor industry became a steady, safe professional haven for Böddecker. She hired as a clay model maker, making prototypes of now-famous speedsters and celeb-limousines that next to no-one can afford. Prestige marques were the ones involved.

Since 2006, the ceramist in her has once again taken the upper hand, and Böddecker set up a ceramics studio with an attached design studio called *Keramikeria* in *Ruhpolding*, Bavaria.





Secret of world literature solved...

The observer of Böddecker's figures quickly cottons on and is surprised:

She looks for things and makes things. You get an inkling – has Böddecker got a suitcase full of gold pieces underneath her wardrobe?

Böddecker sends the viewer of her work into a world they are familiar with, have been familiar with for a long time and that lies buried in their heart, sometimes untouched and sometimes forgotten since the onset of adulthood. It is a phenomenal world of childhood forces that she conjures up with her figures, thus reminding us not to forget this world any longer.

The figurines seem to be singing all together, “Every life needs joy. An identity that every individual has an existence and is entitled to experience it individually if life is later to be perceived as fulfilled.” And yes, they say that life is fun too, and can be full of playful delight. It is not by chance that our species is called homo ludens, man the player.

It would be no surprise if Böddecker – of course – had a



top -
left -

“An-Klage” (“Accusation”) – Detail
“Chinese Whispers”

opposite, top -

“Adam und Amerin”



Mia Böddecker,

b. 1975, qualified as a master craftswoman after graduating from the Berufsfachschule für Keramik in Landshut. At the time, she was the youngest master to qualify with the Chamber of Skilled Trades for Lower Bavaria and the Upper Palatinate. She has since been a judge for the school's internal award, the Dannerpreis. Motivated by her love of Italy, immediately after qualifying, she trained in the ancient art of mosaics in Spilimbergo, where she also joined the artists's group, Nerofumo. To use her skills practically and efficiently in industry and to become acquainted with working professionally and in a structured manner, especially in stressful conditions, she trained from scratch in the motor industry in Germany. For three years, she worked as a clay model maker for a design studio and from October 2003 she worked freelance for BMW, Rolls Royce, Porsche, AUDI, Lamborghini, KIA, KTM and Ferrari. From 2006, she has run Keramikeria, a studio for ceramics and mosaic in her home town of Ruppolding, Bavaria. She has always considered her years of experience in the motor industry as a counterpoint to her creative work in ceramics. But every development demands a reorientation at its zenith, thus after leaving the automotive industry, Böddecker, as a newcomer, is completely open to the complete ceramic interpretation of her creative originality.

horse and a monkey in her house and garden, if there was a photo stuck to her mirror of the ship called the Hoptoad and letters from the king of the South Sea Islands lay on her kitchen table. Two multicoloured giants guard the door. You have to pass them to enter Keramikeria.

Instead of lifting up horses bodily, she now deals with cars for the motor industry. "The merging of art, ceramics, design and modelling cars is something I need to live and to balance and coordinate my energy. My personal creative work at Keramikeria and the integrative, communicative team work in the motor industry continually intertwine and mutually enrich each other. It is this creative interaction that forms the source of my own creativity."

But at some point the governess came and closed up the lively childhood Villa Villekulla and now no one knows how the grown up version of Pippi Longstocking earns a living or what she is doing, or where she might have ended up. No one?

Oh yes we do! Here she is, Mia Rollgardinia Victualia Peppermint Longstocking, before our very eyes. The secret of world literature has thus been solved.

She has become a phenomenal ceramist with huge talent, dancing lightly between the grotesque and the humoresque. It is spreading to all four corners of the world, bubbling with joy, happiness and delight!

Thank you so much, Mia Rollgardinia! <http://keramikeria.de/>

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