

Layers

Michal Alon - Retrospective

An Exhibition in your Memory

Curator: Nitza Cohen Mohr

The late Michal Alon was a ceramic artist whose work lies between the functional and the sculptural. She fell ill and passed away suddenly at the age of seventy-four, leaving behind a studio that looks as if she is returning at any moment, and an extensive, impressive body of work. Alon was born in Haifa, daughter of Hanna Charag-Zuntz, one of the three "mothers" of Israeli ceramics. Early in her path she chose to distance herself from ceramics and studied industrial design at Bezalel, where she met Uri Alon who would become her life partner. Following her mother's injury, Alon joined her in the studio and learned from her. She acquired perfectionism and a virtuosic command of material, but over the years her work also gained great freedom, creativity, curiosity, research, and boldness.

Wheel-throwing was central in Alon's work. Many of her pieces are composed of elements she created separately and assembled into a single object like a puzzle (vases, 2002–2021), almost as though she were joining fragments of life into a complete picture. Glazes were an inseparable part of her work, and she specialized in formulating and using them. She was deeply influenced by the British potter Colin Pearson. Layers and textures became an integral part of her work, and through them she developed a unique visual language. Observing nature - landscapes, rock formations, lichens, soil, and plant life - was part of her practice and found expression in her art.

This retrospective exhibition presents works by Alon from the years 1996–2020. Series of functional Objects such as *Spheres* (1999–2023), alongside sculptural series such as *Layers* (1996) and the installation *Sand Towers* (2007). Over the years she added other materials and techniques to the ceramic medium, such as weaving and stitching with iron and copper wire (*Patchwork Quilt*, 2015) and decal printing. The political situation in the country deeply affected her, and she created works addressing this (*Feel at Home*, 2023).

Michal Alon loved art, and she loved ceramics and ceramicists. Alongside her work as an artist, she was a beloved teacher at Givat Haviva. She taught until she fell ill at the age of seventy-three. Her presence and her work will continue to inspire groups of devoted students who followed her over the years. Together with Uri, she collected numerous ceramic objects that became the collection displayed in their home, including works by her mother. This exhibition is a roadmap to her many years in the field. The tulip bulbs she had planted in her garden finally bloomed in the spring before her passing.

Heartfelt thanks to Uri and Yair Alon for making this exhibition in memory of your beloved possible, and for your tireless efforts toward it.

Nitza Cohen Mohr