

# INTERNATIONAL DKG AWARD: The Design of the DKG's New Premium Award

H. Kittel

In spring 2015, the Board of the German Ceramic Society (DKG) approached the renowned BURG GIEBICHENSTEIN University of Art and Design Halle/DE to go forward with a project for the development of a new, international DKG award. With Prof. Hubert Kittel, Head of the Department of Ceramic/Glass Design, the initial premises for the design were clarified. At a DKG Board Meeting in October 2015 at the University of Art and Design Halle, the basic objectives and concept were confirmed and a design team under the direction of Prof. Kittel commissioned to elaborate ideas and preliminary models (Fig. 1). During the DKG General Assembly in Freiberg/DE in March 2016, the different models were presented, discussed and a preferred design confirmed with approval of the DKG Board. At the same time, the design team was entrusted with the realisation and provision of a limited small series. At the beginning of 2017, the awards could be made available to the DKG.

## Objective

Against the background of worldwide competition and knowledge transfer, the DKG intends in a very special, unique way, to honour personalities and outstanding achievements in teaching and research as well as in ceramics field practice. Alongside the existing honours presented by the DKG, the INTERNATIONAL DKG AWARD is to be a premium award to support future positioning and strategic orientation in an original way with high publicity impact. This award can be conferred on private individuals and legal entities (for the first time in 2017). The award ceremony will remain a permanent fixture at the DKG's Annual Assemblies.

## Design idea and symbolic content

The design and conceptual objective was aimed at a search for an exceptional, three-dimensional ceramic design object that would differ radically in form and features from conventional honorary awards (plaque, medal, cup, etc.).

The design team wanted to harness the symbolic power of elementary design elements and archetypes to express the wide variety and span of ceramic culture in one

object with universal validity. Unusual porcelain objects, based on a sophisticated plaster mould method (for slip casting) devised by the then Masters student Kyungmin Lee (Westerwald Award Winner 2014), provided the first models for adaption and further development. This led to three configurations (Fig. 2), which reference the different and highly contrasting appearance of ceramic products.

Two formal basic motifs were selected and combined: a closed form (a receptacle) and an open structure (ribs/lamellae). The preferred variation marries the two motifs, assigning each the same value, with profound symbolism: the rotationally symmetric core form ("vase") is sheathed over one half. As wings or fans so to speak, the ribbed structure corresponds with the body of the vase. The appearance of these ribs is intended to remind the beholder of technically designed structural elements.

At the same time, the team set out to address associative fields at different poles, like for example open versus closed; the single, individual and sensual versus serial, variable and rational; art and design versus technology; tradition versus innovation. The



**Fig. 1** Design team: Prof. Hubert Kittel (2<sup>nd</sup> row l.), Kyungmin Lee MA (1<sup>st</sup> row l.), Sangkyoung Lee MA (1<sup>st</sup> row, r.), Lisa A. Scherer BA (2<sup>nd</sup> row r.) (Source: Dipl.-Designer Steffi Auffenbauer)

design object is based on a diagonally divided, square layout and offers the beholder interesting visual connections.



**Fig. 2** Plaster models for discussion of the different variations, preferred model on the right, height: approx 25 cm  
(Source: Kyungmin Lee)



**Fig. 3** Prototype in generative shaping made of RBSiC by Schunk Ingenieurkeramik GmbH  
(Source: Raisa Galofre MA, Berlin)

**Realisation**

During the realisation of the first sample pieces, two shaping routes were followed: first classic slip casting with hard-paste porcelain and second generative shaping on the basis of the design team’s CAD data by means of 3D-printing (basis: powder bed with reaction-bonded SiC) at Schunk Ingenieurkeramik GmbH, a company based in Willich/DE (Fig. 3).

Parallel to this, after the first attempts in the studio in Halle, Kyungmin Lee and Sangkyoung Lee worked at the host company Rosenthal GmbH (Rosenthal factory am Rothbühl/DE). Here in months of detailed work, it was possible to overcome the quirks of the complex geometry – thanks to the

superb concerted effort of the two Korean post-graduates and the team around Production Manager Joachim Reuer.

Finally, the team decided in favour of the classical material: a slightly modified hard-paste porcelain. The highly aesthetic appearance, the surface finish, the colour and possibilities for decoration were clear arguments in favour of this classic design in the whitewares world.

In the end, the team presented the porcelain objects with appropriate refinement: glazed, but with a bisque surface of the relief of the vase shape and subtle onglaze decoration. What is regarded as the front of the object is decorated with the name INTERNATIONAL DKG AWARD in a light grey colour, and the edges of the ribs or lamellae have been printed with strips of gold. These emphasize the rhythmic appearance of the back of the award (Fig. 4).

**Accessories**

The design student Lisa A. Scherer took charge of the accessories. She developed, for example, a very original and at the same time functional packaging solution (Fig. 5). This consists of a cleverly designed folding box with banderol (including embossing) and an informative flyer that can be used both as certificate and signature document.

The stand-out feature of this packaging design is its dual function as representative packaging with two “display windows” and



**Fig. 4** Full view of the award in its finished object (l.), detailed view from above (centre), and side view (r.); height 22,7 cm, weight 990 g  
(Source: Raisa Galofre MA, Berlin)

as form-fit protective packaging convenient for transport. The entire production (including sample testing, binding and embossing) was the work of Dipl.-Ing. Karl Bock, the owner of the renowned box maker factory Kurt Bock Kartonagen in Zeulenroda/DE.

**Acknowledgement**

As Design Project Manager and Coordinator, Prof. Hubert Kittel thanks all those colleagues and silent supporters not named here, but, above all, his three former students. The design team has been delighted to accept this wonderful challenge from the DKG and found its perpetual openness and willingness to get on board as both encouraging and uplifting. Now, the team hopes and wishes that all those honoured with this award in future will also feel a little of this spirit of the DKG and the design team at BURG GIEBICHENSTEIN.



**Fig. 5** Packaging design solution: closed (l.) and open (r.) with folded box, banderol and flyer (Source: Raisa Galofre MA, Berlin)

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## Abridged CV

### of the Design Team Members

#### Prof. Hubert Kittel, Halle/Saale/DE:

##### Project Management

born in 1953, in Reichenbach/Vogtland, Germany

1979 Diploma as a designer of vessels at BURG GIEBICHENSTEIN University of Industrial Design, Halle

since 1980 Employed in the porcelain industry and first teaching work at Berlin-Weissensee Art Academy

1994–2016 Prof. of Product Design, Head of the Department of Ceramic/Glass Design at BURG GIEBICHENSTEIN University of Art and Design, Halle

#### Kyungmin Lee, MA, Halle/Saale: idea for the shape, realisation

born in 1983 in Pusan, Korea

2008 BA Degree Craft-Design, Chung-ang University Seoul, Korea

2011 MA Degree in Ceramic Design, Aichi Prefectural University of Fine Arts and Music, Japan

2014 MA Degree in Product Design and Applied Art, BURG GIEBICHENSTEIN University of Art and Design, Halle (with Prof. H. Kittel)

Since then self-employed in Korea and Halle (Studio Lee)

Numerous international awards and honours

#### Sangkyoung Lee, MA, Halle/Saale: concept implementation, realisation

born in 1985 in Seoul, Korea

2008 BA Degree in Ceramic Art at Ewha-Women's University, Seoul

2011 MA Degree in Ceramic Art at the same place

2015 MA Degree in Product Design and Applied Art, BURG GIEBICHENSTEIN University of Art and Design, Halle (with Prof. H. Kittel)

Since then self-employed in Halle (Studio Lee)

Numerous international awards and honours

#### Lisa Antonie Scherer, BA, Kronburg/DE: packaging concept, graphic design

born in 1988 in Ulm, Germany

2009 Advancement Award of Dr Rudolf-Zorn-Foundation in Kempten, Germany

2016 Scholarship holder of the German Academic Scholarship Foundation

2016 BA-Degree Industrial Design, BURG GIEBICHENSTEIN University of Art and Design, Halle (with Prof. H. Kittel)

Since then self-employed

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