



Bottle

Gillian Lowndes

Not on display

Title/Description: Bottle

Artist/Maker: Gillian Lowndes (Artist)

Object Type: Vessel

Materials: Stoneware

Technique: Throwing

Measurements: h=370, w=115, d=102 mm

Accession Number: 50794

Historic Period: Mid 20th century

Production Place: Britain, England

Credit Line: Accepted under the Cultural Gifts Scheme by HM Government from Leslie Birks Hay and allocated to SCVA, 2016

This thrown vessel is an early work by Gillian Lowndes and possibly even made when she was a student at the Central School of Arts in the mid-1950s (see also 50795). It belonged to ceramicist and author Tony Birks, who attended Central at the same time as Lowndes. Although this bottle is far removed from the assemblage practice Lowndes is now renowned for, its markings show Lowndes early interest in eroded and experimental surfaces.

Lowndes says it was not until 1960, when she joined a studio with Robin Welch and Kate Watts that she began to experiment with handbuilding. [1] A handbuilt work in the Sainsbury Centre Collection from the mid-1960s (see 50790) shows the beginnings of a new direction. In 1970 she moved to Nigeria for eighteen months and this experience transformed her approach to ceramics. From the late 1970s onwards, she created bricolage sculptures that entangled, fossilised and fired everyday debris into 'abstract structures' [2] which spoke a new and radical ceramic language.

Sim Panaser, August 2020

[1] Fiona Bird, 'Potting it Together', *The Times*, August 21 1969, London.

[2] Lowndes uses the term 'abstract structures' to describe her work in, Henry Pim, 'Uncertain Echoes', *Ceramic Review*, 103, (January/February 1987), 10-12, (p. 11).

Further Reading

Birks, Tony, 'Remembrance: Gillian Lowndes', *Ceramics: Art and Perception*, 84, (2011) 106-107

Fielding, Amanda, Gillian Lowndes, (Ruthin: Ruthin Craft Centre in association with York Museums Trust, 2013)

Gillian Lowndes: *New Ceramic Sculpture*, exhibition catalogue, (London: Crafts Council Gallery, 1987)

Pim, Henry, 'Uncertain Echoes', *Ceramic Review*, 103, (January/February 1987), 10-12
