




# Ceramics on show

As filming on the BBC's search for Britain's 'best budding potter' continues, the judges on the show, Kate Malone and Keith Brymer Jones, have a message for CR readers

It's coming, BBC Two's potting answer, they say, to *The Great British Bake Off*. The six-part series, screening this autumn and made by the team behind the baking programme, is seeking Britain's next pottery stars. Each week contestants will create a 'Main Make', culminating in a big reveal from the kiln. Judges Kate Malone and Keith Brymer Jones have been finding the experience exhilarating. Without giving too much away, they say, the challenges set for the contestants range from coiling pots to raku-firing and very much more.

'I accepted the invitation to judge because I believe that having the chance to be creative with clay is a privilege and a pleasure,' says Kate, 'and I want to share that. The more people understand and appreciate our craft, the more they enjoy ceramics by looking, buying or making, the better for them and the better for our field, for us potters.' For Keith, filming is bringing home for him, once again, just how 'ceramics and its processes are so tactile and soulful. The series is going to put pottery in the spotlight. Viewers will be seeing, many for the first time, the amazing range of processes involved.' He and Kate, says Keith, 'come from very different ends of the ceramic spectrum in terms of our careers, but we both share an emotional connection with clay. And from whichever approach you come to

ceramics, it is the craftsman or woman ethic that always holds true.'

For them both, the programme represents a signal opportunity for potters working in the UK. 'When I shared a studio in Barcelona,' Kate says, 'fellow potters earned a living alongside selling their work from teaching classes and small courses in their studios or in workshops in the community. Public liability insurance does not cost too much. I want to suggest to ceramic makers that they should prepare now and make the most of the opportunity the programme is going to represent. It will be broadcast – at a modest estimate – to some two million people.' From that audience the judges know will come a swell of interest in trying pottery. 'We want to see people connect with making again,' says Kate, 'parents having pots made by their children on their shelves once more, and gifts made for each other. There will be a demand for courses, large and small.' The potential, says Keith, 'is that the series will have an enormous impact on ceramics in Britain. It will be a positive force. It's all about the clay – let's make the most of this fantastic chance for us all.' 

*The Great British Pottery Throw Down will be an autumn screening on BBC Two.*

## KATE MALONE

Kate is known for her extraordinary glazes and her shapes, which, she says are 'all inspired by the life-force and reality of nature'

- Born in London in 1959
- Attended Bristol Polytechnic from 1979-1982, BA (Hons) Ceramics
- Graduated with an MA in 1986 from the Royal College of Art, London
- Her work is held in multiple public collections, including The British Council's Manchester and Bahamas Collections; Arts Council, London; National Museum & Gallery of Wales, Cardiff and The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
- Her many public commissions include *The Bud*, for the John Hopkins Hospital, Baltimore, USA and *Ceramic Wall* for the American Express HQ in Brighton
- Her studio is in London; [katemaloneceramics.com](http://katemaloneceramics.com)

## KEITH BRYMER JONES

Keith has been involved with clay all his working life, starting off as a clay boy in a pottery. He has hand-thrown thousands of pieces for places such as Habitat and Barneys, New York

- The first piece he ever made, age eleven, was a pottery owl
- After a brief time as the lead singer for a punk band, he became an apprentice for Harefield Pottery in London, aged eighteen
- His first studio was in Highgate; clients included Monsoon, Laura Ashley and Heal's
- It was some twenty years ago that he developed the 'Word Range', for which he is so well known. His favourite word in the range is 'hot', because of its symmetry
- His studio is now in Whitstable in Kent, where he hand designs each item, before traveling to China, where the designs are mass produced. Each piece is then finished by hand.
- See more at [keithbrymerjones.com](http://keithbrymerjones.com) (and don't miss his great videos)

