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THE WEEKLY MAGAZINE



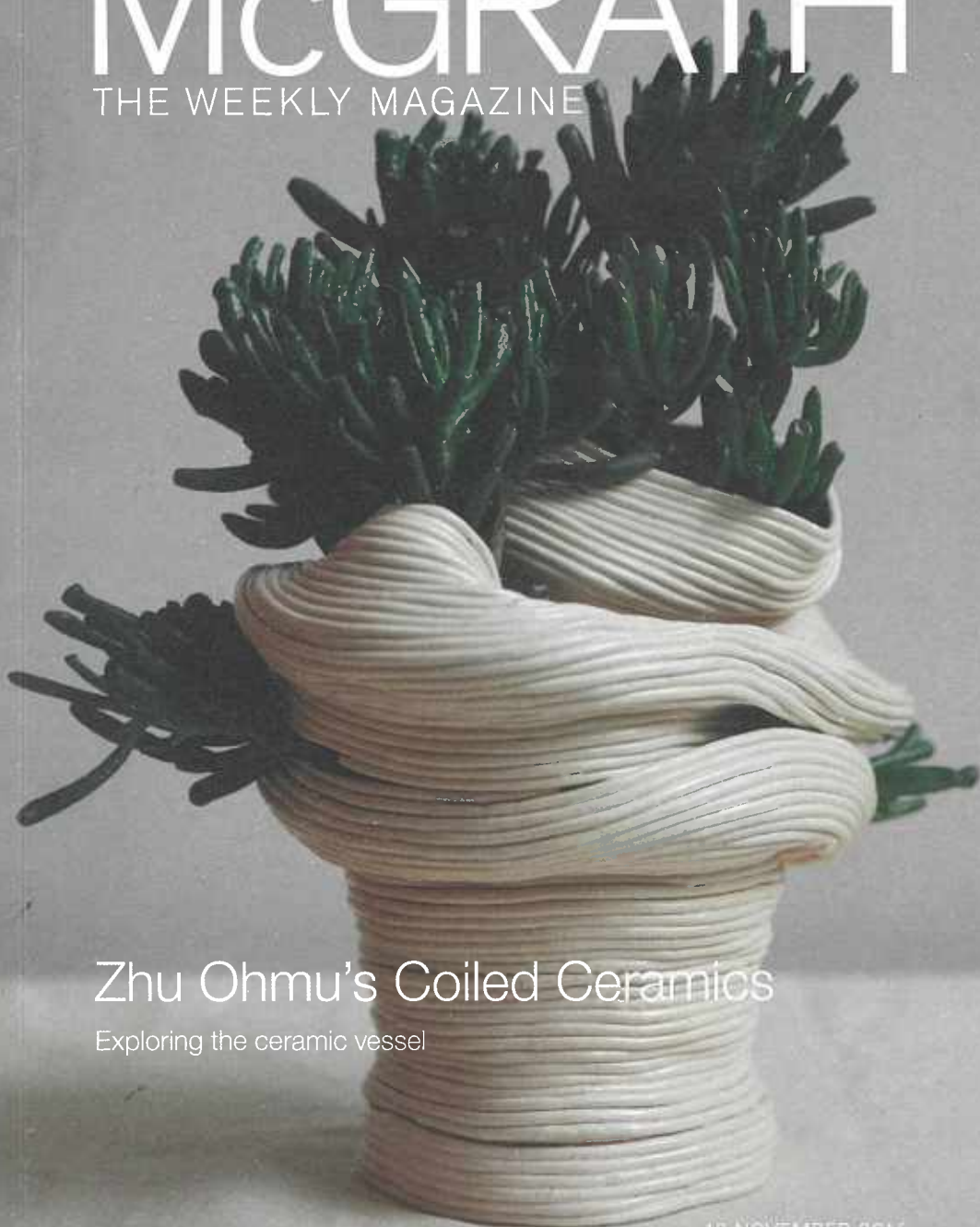
Zhu Ohmu's Coiled Ceramics

Exploring the ceramic vessel

12 NOVEMBER 2016

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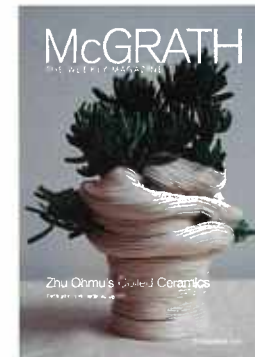
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Coil upon coil, Zhu Ohmu's works slouch and slink, plants seemingly woven into the ins and outs of the ceramic vessels. The works are a manifestation of her passion for the "symbiotic relationship between nature and the urban environment," and the striking result of a trained artist, but a self-taught ceramicist.

Zhu Ohmu is a pseudonym, harking back to Taiwanese born, Melbourne based Rose Weir's cultural heritage. "I'm trying to reclaim and reconnect to my cultural heritage with my



Cover story
Zhu Ohmu's Coiled Ceramic

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Courtesy of Zhu Ohmu



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artistic identity – Zhu was the name of the first documented ancestor from my mother’s paternal lineage,” Rose explains.

Rose lost some of that connection with her culture while growing up in New Zealand, where she graduated from the Elam School of Fine Arts with Honours, in 2011.

Rose may have studied art, but her focus was on water colours and paintings. Her first foray into clay was when she “started playing with air dry clay to hold (her) growing collection of houseplants.” Her friend Hannah Valentine invited her to do a two person show, and Rose’s beginnings in ceramics began to flourish.

“I originally explored clay coils as a response to 3D printed ceramics. Corresponding to biomimetics – the imitation of models or systems of nature,” Rose explains, “I wanted to see how forms would turn out if I copied the way the 3D printer mound coils on top of each other with my hands.”

The result is charming – and though technology inspired – a clear celebration of the artist’s hand. “Vessels are built through stacking, folding, pressing, pulling and these actions are often dictated by the weight of moist clay,” Rose explains, adding that forms emerge intuitively.



The unknown also means Rose must allow her works to evolve naturally, often with the choice of plant to add to a piece made towards the end, when she knows what will fit. The vast variety of plants she uses in her works is testament to her love of botany. "I constantly find inspiration from mother nature and those who promote sustainable living," says Rose.

Zhu Ohmu
Zhuohmu.com

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