Valeriia Pugach

Portfolio

2026

Artist statement

A closed form is finished. What it holds is not.

I work with closed volumes. A mark interrupts the surface – a trace of an event, and a quiet indication that the form is not empty.
What lies inside remains private and unknowable; it reaches the surface without altering the shape that contains it.

There is no drama in this, only an event; no tension, only a fact. The form remains closed, while something within it continues beyond what can be seen.
The two exist alongside one another: the visible form and the unseen presence it carries, the latter without an end.

The same is true of people. Almost none of the interior shows. What is carried within us rarely alters the surface, though it is always there.
I recognise it in others before I recognise it in myself.



‘Bearing XV’ 2026
stoneware
31x29 cm



‘Bearing XVI’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
18x12 cm



‘Bearing XI’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
30x17 cm



‘Bearing I’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
15x11 cm



‘Bearing IX’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
20x18 cm



‘Bearing XIX’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
15x19 cm



‘Bearing VI’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
19x15 cm



‘Bearing VIII’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
19x13 cm



‘Bearing V’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
30x18 cm



‘Bearing XVIII’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
12x17 cm



‘Bearing III’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
18x11 cm



‘Bearing II’ 2026
stoneware, wax finish
28x18 cm

Practice description

I build by hand, coiling each form from grogged stoneware. The volumes are closed and worked from the outside until the surface is even and the shape resolved.

The incisions are marked out and opened before the first firing. Nothing is left to the material: position, length and width are decided in advance. A cut may run long or it may open wide, never both – past that limit the form deforms, and the work begins to describe its own damage rather than register it.

Surfaces are unglazed, finished with wax, leaving the clay body visible.

My experience is the research material – observed and translated into form rather than recounted.

BIO

Valeriia Pugach (b. 1994, Saint Petersburg) is a Lisbon-based sculptor working in hand-built stoneware. Largely self-taught, she began working with clay in 2022. Apart from a year in the ceramics programme at Ar.Co, Lisbon (2024–25), she continues to work independently.

Group exhibitions

2026 ‘Terra da Luz’ Centro Comporta, Comporta, Portugal
2026 ‘Emergence’ Forte de Albarquel, Setúbal, Portugal
2026 ‘Make ceramic great again. Democracy of material’ CABANA MAD Gallery, Lisbon, Portugal
2025 ‘Exposição de Outono’ Ar.Co Almada - Quinta de São Miguel, Almada, Portugal

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