



VALENTINOS

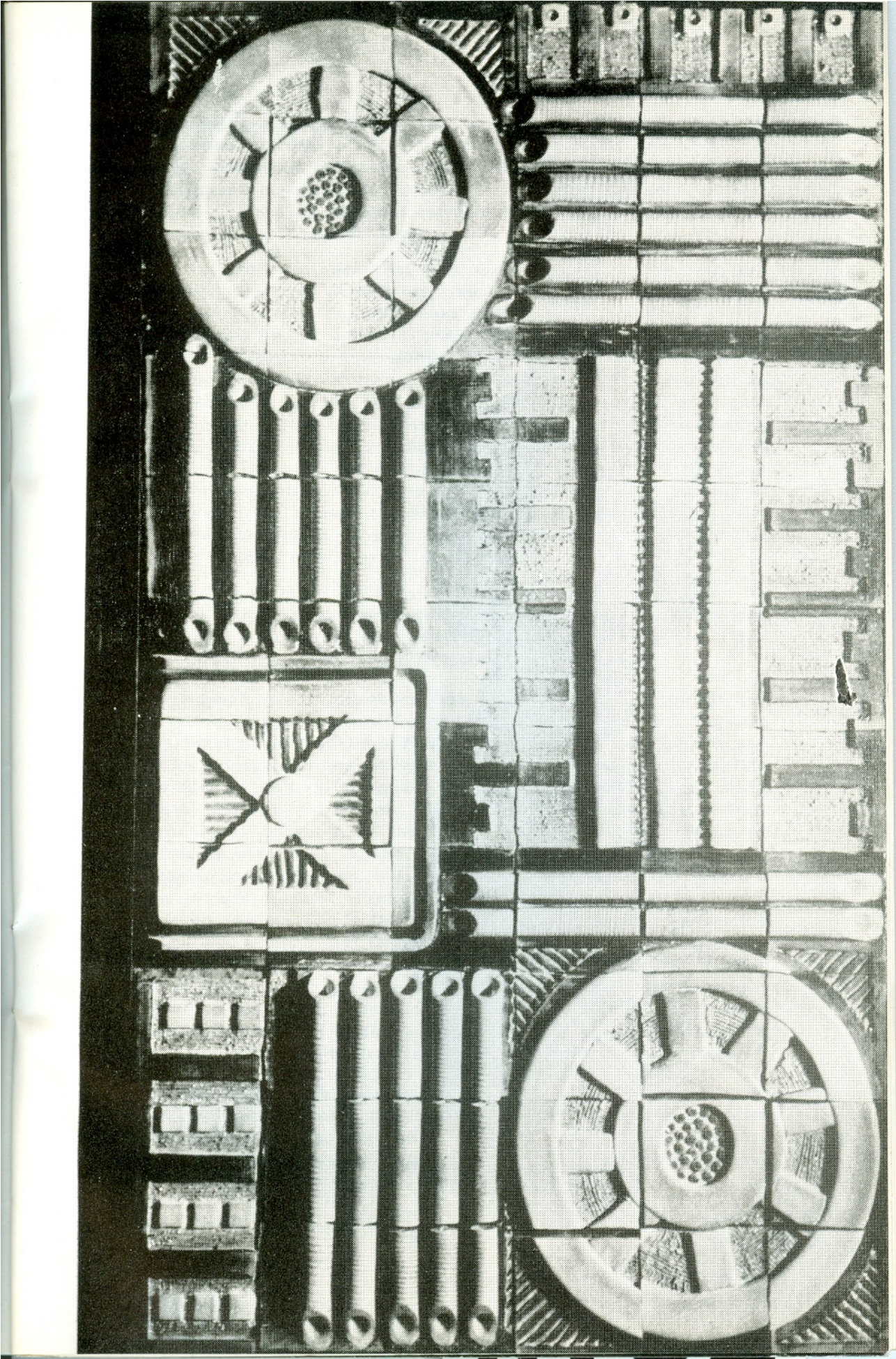
merlin gallery

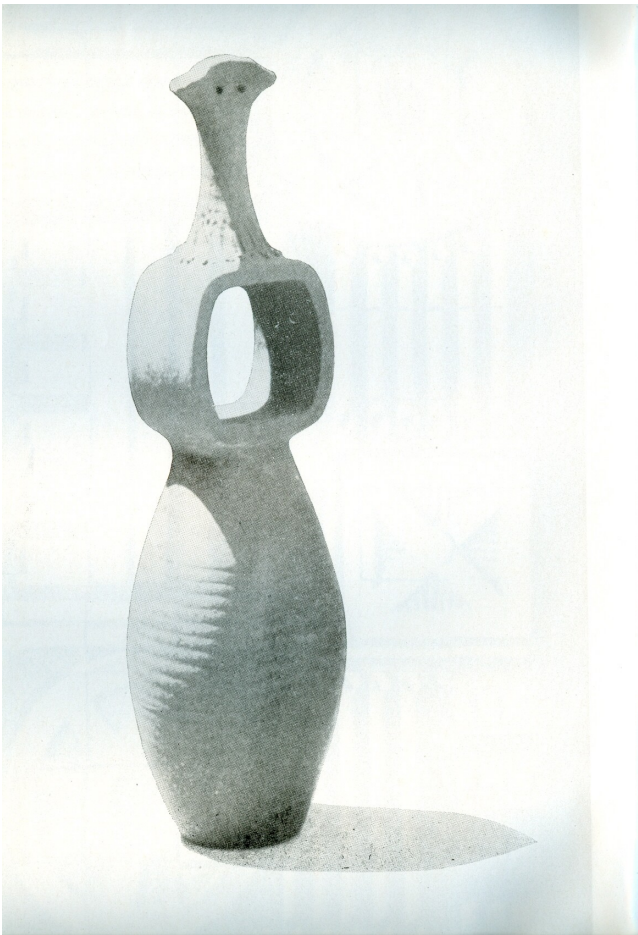
1966

Valentino Charalambous
Institute of Fine Arts
Waziriya, Baghdad, Iraq.



ΒΑΛΕΝΤΙΝΟΣ





Some years ago, about 1948 an attractive boy of sixteen or so, arrived one day at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London, and asked to be admitted as a student in the Department of Ceramics. This presented a problem: it was the middle of term, the classes were full; he had not had the usual preliminary training and was in any case too young.

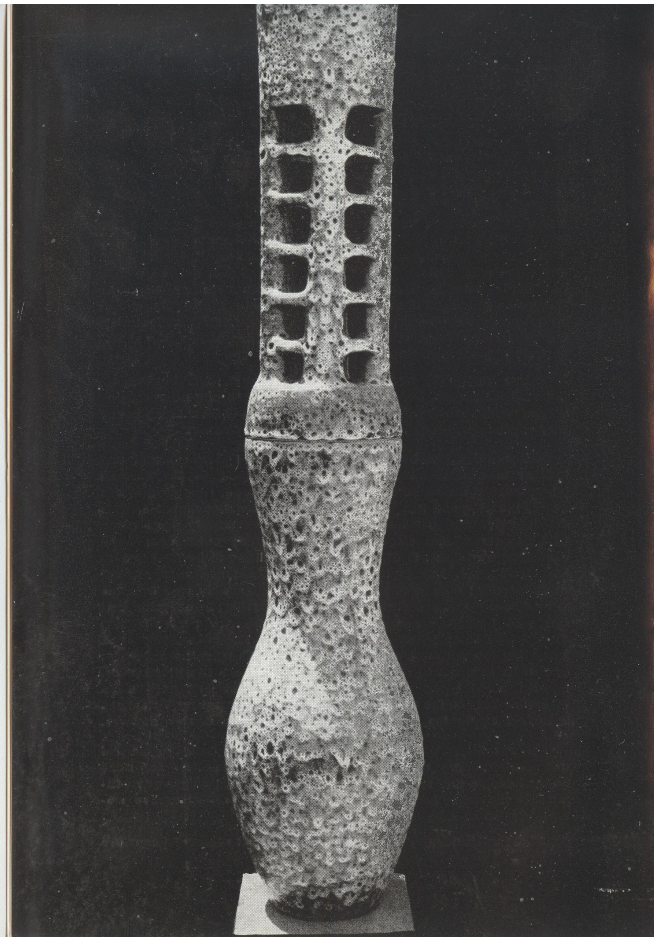
It would have been easy and usual for us to say "we are very sorry we can't admit you..."; but there was something about this eager boy from Cyprus, whose father was a traditional potter, that inclined us for once to break the rules and admit him as a student 'on trial' for six months. There was no need for further worry or indecision; Valentinos Charalambous soon showed that he had inherited the family skill, and had the intelligence to graft onto it all that the school could offer in the way of technical knowledge and a broader outlook on design. It must have been all a little bewildering after the limitations of a traditional Cypriot pottery, but Valentinos absorbed it all so apparently easily that at the end of three years he gained the Diploma of the Central School with Distinction. And what was more remarkable, his work had not lost its truly Hellenic character.

This was quite instinctive and unconscious; working in quite different techniques, his shapes had a proportion and balance, and his decoration a rhythm and distribution, which without being in any way a pastiche, proclaimed their source of inspiration.

Valentinos Charalambous has since worked as a potter and teacher in several countries, and is now Head of the Ceramic Department at the Institute of Fine Arts in Baghdad. I am glad to see that his latest work has not lost its highly individual character. This individuality, and unwillingness, or perhaps inability to go along with the international stream, is truly of value nowadays, when contemporary idioms, in all the arts, are inclined to be the same all the World over. This is not to suggest that these pots are not contemporary; they are, but they are commendably free from the more obvious modern clichés. Valentinos dares to make pots that are well thrown, perfectly true, and symmetrical; a refreshing change from shapes that deliberately avoid being either. All potters know that this sprang from a revulsion against mechanical accuracy, and at its best does produce interesting and very sensitive curves, and it brought along with it a revival of interest in shapes made otherwise than on the wheel; but to see a fine big pot by Valentinos is to feel again the thrill of seeing the work of a master thrower.

His tablewares, jugs, bottles and drinking cups are elegant and contemporary and beautifully made; few potters can make better handles and spouts; while his flat dishes with their gay patterns in slip under brightly coloured glazes are an attractive modern version of a medieval technique.

Among his large decorative forms the most successful ones are

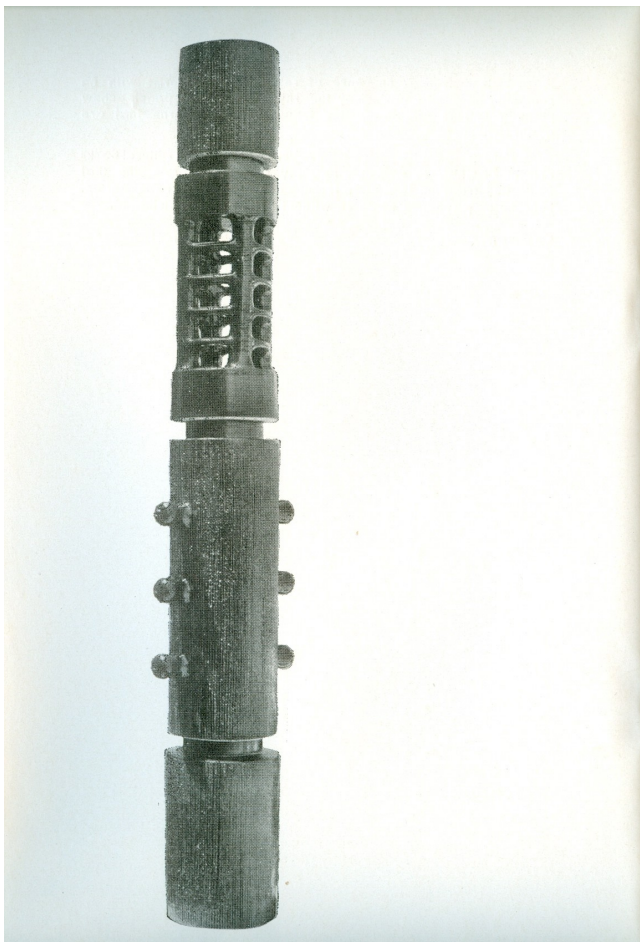


those built up from a sequence of related thrown forms with no conflicting additions to destroy the rhythm. His wall panels show pleasant colours and interesting textures, and patterns that are again Hellenic in feeling.

Here is a young potter with a very old and fine cultural background of which he may only be dimly aware, yet adapting that instinctive tradition to modern techniques with superb craftsmanship. Long he may continue to do so without betraying his birthright.

London

DORA BILLINGTON



« Valentinus ne recherche aucune originalité gratuite de forme dans ses créations, toute sa personnalité s'exprimant dans la décoration, laquelle, d'une stylisation simple et dynamique, s'adapte à l'équilibre classique des proportions de ses poteries, inspirées de la première période grecque. »

LA REVUE MODERNE Paris 1951

« Take a potter's wheel that was old in Babylon, the simple red and black patterns of the early Greeks or the more intricate decorations of Byzantium; add three years' art training in post-war London and the spice of original artistic talent and you have the pottery of Valentinus Charalambous. »

THE POTTERY GAZETTE London 1954

« When one looks at his work one thinks of Gardew before his pig-tail and of the classical world from which they both stemmed in different ways. But Valentinus has the greater clarity and definition, born out of a more sunlit earth than medieval Britain, and the more civilised for it. »

THE POTTERY QUARTERLY London 1956.

« Προχωρεί κι' ανοίγει καινούργιους δρόμους. Πειραματίζεται, χρησιμοποιεί νέους τρόπους για το θερνίκωμα και την απόδοση μιάς πλούσιας ύψης στα έργα του, προχωρεί σε ποιό ελεύθερους δυναμικούς τρόπους όπου το έργο τελειώνεται σαν από μόνο του, καθοδηγημένο από ένα ένστικτο υποσυνείδητο, σοφό, θγαίνει από τη λεπτή ύλη με τη δική του αυτοτέλεια και πνοή. Σε μερικά έργα επιστρέφει σε πρωτόγονες αρχαϊκές φόρμες τόσο πού μερικά νά μοιάζουν με είδωλα πανάρχαιων πολιτισμών. »

Πάνος Κράλης «Ελευθερία» Λευκωσία 1965

Κατά την διάρκεια της ζωής του, ο Καραγιάννης δημιούργησε περισσότερα από 100 έργα, τα οποία εκτέλεσε με μεγάλη προσοχή και μεθοδικότητα. Τα έργα του χαρακτηρίζονται από την απλότητα και την καθαρότητα των γραμμών, καθώς και από την ισορροπία και την αρμονία των χρωμάτων.

1948 - 1951 ΛΟΝΔΙΝΟ

Γεννήθηκε στην Κύπρο το 1930 από πατέρα άγγειοπλάστη.

Σπούδασε στο Λονδίνο στο Central School of Arts and Crafts από το 1948 ως το 1951 (Δίπλωμα μετά διακρίσεως).

Το 1951 - 1952 υπηρέτησε ως Βοηθός Καθηγητής στην ίδια σχολή

Έργαστηκε στην Κύπρο στα εργαστήρια του πατέρα του από το 1951 έως το 1957.

Από το 1957 διευθύνει το Τμήμα Κεραμικής της Κρατικής Ακαδημίας Καλών Τεχνών του Ίράκ.

Έκθεσεις :

- 1950 Λονδίνο, Arts & Crafts Exhibition Society, Victoria and Albert Museum.
- 1951 Λονδίνο, Redfern Gallery (άκουαρέλες).
- 1951 Λονδίνο, British Council (πρώτο βραβείο).
- 1952 Λευκωσία, British Council (άτομική).
- 1955 Λονδίνο, Crafts Centre of Great Britain.
- 1956 Λονδίνο, Heal's Mansard Gallery.
- 1959 Βαγδάτη, Mansoor Club, Έτήσια Έκθεση της Iraqi Artists' Society.
- 1961 Βαγδάτη, Έθνική Πινακοθήκη, S. P. Group.
- 1964 Βαγδάτη, Έθνική Πινακοθήκη, Έτήσια Έκθεση της Iraqi Artists' Society.
- 1964 Ουάσιγκτων, Washington Kiln Club.
- 1965 Βαγδάτη, S. P. Group.
- 1965 Βαγδάτη, Έθνική Πινακοθήκη (άτομική).
- 1965 Λευκωσία, Πνευματική Στέγη (άτομική)



meftin gallery - 8 meftin street
athens 134 telephone 630.802

merlin gallery - 8 merlin street
athens 134 telephone 630.802

Ἡ ἔκδοσις τελεῖ
ὑπὸ τὴν αἰγίδα
τοῦ Ὑπουργείου
Ἐθνικῆς Παιδείας
καὶ Θρησκευμάτων