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Antenna: Ceramics star

In her weekly column, Meredith Etherington-Smith turns her antenna to the exhibitions giving ceramics a shake up

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Take-away London

8 September — 1 November

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Above and top: Barnaby Barford, *The Tower of Babel*. Bone china buildings © Barnaby Barford © Victoria and Albert Museum, London

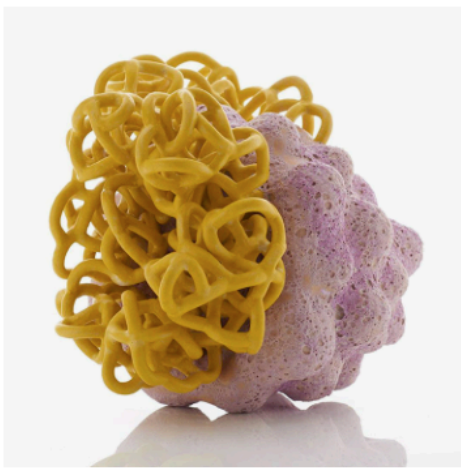
Now showing at the V&A, *The Tower of Babel* is ceramic artist Barnaby Barford's take on London today. Standing at six metres high, the work is made up of 3000 individual bone china buildings, each of which is a reproduction of an actual London shop — all initially photographed by the artist. At the base are derelict shops and Pound Land palaces, rising towards a pinnacle of exclusive boutiques and galleries.

Now here's the good news — you can buy a whole shop and take it away. The cheapest are the derelict ones at £95, with prices going up to £6,000 as the shops get smarter. Each shop is individually signed by the artist. Go and see the whole installation in the Mediaeval & Renaissance Galleries until 1 November.

Fresh in Stoke on Trent

Until 8 November





Tessa Eastman, *Residing Cloud*, 2015. Glazed High Fired Ceramic. Photograph by Sylvain Deleu.
Courtesy British Ceramic Biennial



Ragna Mouritzen, 3D printed porcelain and stain, 2015. Courtesy British Ceramic Biennial

At one point, the potteries — the traditional towns that, until the late 20th century, made fine porcelain and other wares to export to the world — seemed set to extinguish their kilns for good. But, with the Wedgwood Collection having been acquired for the nation, and the growth of the fascinating [British Ceramic Biennial](#), held in the old Spode factory, fresh winds are blowing through historic ceramics centre Stoke. Part of the event is a section called [FRESH](#), showcasing first-time exhibitors — many of whom are still at art college — ranging from ceramic sculptors, to ceramicists happy to produce new versions of old dishes. Have a look at [Tessa Eastman's](#) amorphous vegetables and [Ragna Mouritzen's](#) 3D experimentations which she explains that neither machine nor man could have made on their own. Fascinating.

Delicate and subtle in Mayfair

6-27 October





Hitomi Hosono, *A Large Orange Coral Bowl*, 2014. Moulded, carved and hand-built coloured porcelain. Courtesy Adrian Sassoon

Charming and subtle, over 30 pieces by [Hitomi Hosono](#) are to be exhibited in [Colefax's 18th century house](#) in London's Mayfair, many for the first time. The artist has described the property as 'a magnificent English house in which a sense of cross-cultural spirit has flourished'. Works such as the Small Roses Bowl, made from moulded, carved and hand built porcelain, are inspired by the classic fabrics of Colefax & Fowler, and the artist has stated she is 'particularly drawn towards objects with a history of trade and the Far East'. The resulting ceramics have something of the past, yet also look rather futuristic — and all share a delicate and pretty quality often rare in contemporary ceramics.

On the White Road

26 September — 3 January 2016

Edmund de Waal has followed up his international best-seller *The Hare with The Amber Eyes* with a new book in which he takes the white road through time and place, discovering the genesis and history of white porcelain. The book is episodic, being as much about ceramics as de Waal's travels, which begin in Jingdezhen, China, and take us to Venice, Versailles, Dublin, Dresden, the Appalachian Mountains of South Carolina and Cornwall. Kaolin and culture amount to a global obsession for de Waal — dip into this book and you will never look casually at a piece of white porcelain again.

And then go to the Royal Academy's library and print room for [a white exhibition of over 40 works from the RA and private collections](#) which de Waal has chosen as a personal exploration of the colour white, interwoven throughout the Library.

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