

Decorated: The Sculptural Ceramics of Ebony Russell

Ebony Russell, the winner of the Brookfield Properties Craft Award 2025, presents a striking body of work that challenges conventional ceramic traditions.

Russell is an Australian artist renowned for her innovative sculptural ceramics. Using an unconventional method, she meticulously pipes porcelain in intricate layers, constructing gravity-defying forms. This technique subverts traditional decorative vessel-making, transforming ornamentation into structure and erasing the boundaries between the two. By embracing excess and indulgence, Russell interrogates the historical marginalisation of decorative arts, positioning decoration as a site of power and agency rather than frivolity.

Russell is the first international artist to receive The Brookfield Properties Craft Award. Represented by Cynthia Corbett Gallery, her radical reinterpretation of Wedgwood porcelain and its neoclassical traditions was a key factor in her selection.

***"Where Wedgwood sought perfection in his imitation of antiquity,
Russell leans into the imperfect and invites us to question what we think
we know about the potential of clay."***

Kate Turner, Curator V&A Wedgwood Collection

The Brookfield Properties Craft Award 2025

Now in its sixth year, the Brookfield Properties Craft Award is the UK's leading contemporary craft prize, created in partnership with Crafts Council. Recognising expert craftsmanship and significant contributions to contemporary craft, the award honours artists who push the boundaries of material and tradition.

Russell was selected from a shortlist of exceptional artists, including wood artist **Alan Meredith** (Cavaliero Finn), glass artist **Chris Day** (Vessel Gallery), wood and paper artist **Isobel Napier** (Flow Gallery), and ceramic artist **Valéria Nascimento** (jaggedart). These artists' works are featured in the companion exhibition at **30 Fenchurch**.

Artistic Vision & Practice

Russell's work is deeply rooted in cultural memory and nostalgia, drawing from her Maltese-Dutch heritage. Her piped porcelain sculptures evoke sentimental, often kitsch domestic objects cherished by past generations – those kept in "good rooms" or locked away in display cabinets. Her technique – layering soft porcelain like cake icing – redefines labour and ornamentation, transforming traditionally feminine-coded decorative practices into structures of strength and resilience. The interplay between neoclassical restraint and exuberant embellishment is central to her work, offering a contemporary reimagining of Wedgwood's historic ceramic legacy.

Reflecting on her practice, Russell states:

"My work explores the marginalisation of decoration in Western art history, the historical association between women and ornamentation, and the evolving role of porcelain in contemporary art. This recognition not only celebrates my artistic journey but also underscores the significance of these narratives, emphasising the enduring relationship between women, craft, and decoration."

@ebonyrussell.art | @cynthiacorbettgallery

About the Brookfield Properties

Brookfield Properties is a global real estate developer and operator, managing assets across office, retail, logistics, multifamily, hospitality, and development sectors. With a focus on sustainability, innovation, and excellence, Brookfield Properties is committed to reimagining real estate and fostering cultural engagement.

brookfieldproperties.com | @brookfieldpropertieslondon

About the Crafts Council

The Crafts Council is the UK's national charity for craft, championing craft's impact on society, fostering education and participation, and growing a sustainable craft sector. The Crafts Council plays a pivotal role in shaping contemporary craft.

www.craftscouncil.org.uk | @craftscouncil

Visit our companion exhibition, *Adorned: Celebrating Craft and Form*, at 30 Fenchurch, EC3M 3BD, to explore more works by Ebony Russell alongside artworks by the four finalists of the Brookfield Properties Craft Award.

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Ebony Russell

**Brookfield Properties
Craft Award 2025
Shortlisted Maker**

"My practice investigates the marginalisation of the decorative in Western art history, the historical association of women with decoration, and the evolving role of porcelain and ornament in contemporary art. This recognition not only celebrates my artistic journey but also underscores the value of these narratives, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between women, craft, and decoration in art today."

Ebony Russell, represented at Collect 2025 by Cynthia Corbett Gallery, is an Australian artist who approaches ceramic sculpture with an unorthodox methodology. Her distinctive technique emerged from an interest in gendered aesthetics, labor, and traditional craft practices. Russell meticulously pipes porcelain in intricate layers, creating gravity-defying forms. By challenging conventional methods of making decorative vessels, her work blurs the lines between decoration and structure, erasing traditional boundaries.

Russell's exploration of cultural and artistic practices, once regarded as feminine and thus insignificant, celebrates the decorative, the excess, and the playful politics of purity.

Discipline
Ceramics

ebonyrussell.com

Represented at Collect 2025 by
Cynthia Corbett Gallery, England
thecynthiacorbettgallery.com

Image
Photo by Hande Renshaw

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Council**

30 YEARS

Adorned: Celebrating Craft and Form

Over the past six years, the Brookfield Properties Craft Award has gained prominence as one of the most esteemed craft prizes in the UK.

Adorned: Celebrating Craft and Form exhibits the four finalists of the Brookfield Properties Craft Award alongside the 2025 winner, **Ebony Russell**. The five featured makers in this exhibition explore a diverse range of materials, techniques, and conceptual approaches, each bringing a unique narrative and studio practice to contemporary craft. Collectively, they represent the very best of UK craft innovation and creativity.

The Brookfield Properties Craft Award 2025

Acclaimed Australian ceramicist **Ebony Russell** has been awarded the prestigious 2025 Brookfield Properties Craft Award, becoming the first international artist to receive this distinguished honor. Announced at Collect Art Fair, Russell is represented by Cynthia Corbett Gallery. Her radical reinterpretation of Wedgwood porcelain and its neoclassical traditions played a key role in her selection.

Ebony Russell's distinctive style and conceptual rigor redefine the relationship between decorative aesthetics and form. Russell was selected from a shortlist of exceptional artists, all of whom are showcased here, including wood artist **Alan Meredith** (Cavaliero Finn), glass artist **Chris Day** (Vessel Gallery), wood and paper artist **Isobel Napier** (Flow Gallery), and ceramic artist **Valéria Nascimento** (jaggedart).

Created in partnership with the Crafts Council, this award recognises exceptional craftsmanship and a significant contribution to the contemporary craft narrative in the UK. Russell's signature technique of "piped porcelain" exemplifies both technical mastery and artistic innovation, pushing the boundaries of ceramics by intertwining structure and ornamentation.

Visit our companion exhibition, *Decorated: The Sculptural Ceramics of Ebony Russell*, at 99 Bishopsgate, EC2M 3XD, to experience Russell's solo exhibition.