

Mechelle Bounpraseuth is a ceramic artist inspired by food. She creates wonderful, life-sized clay sculptures of food, condiment bottles, discarded items, litter and every day objects.

*Mechelle Bounpraseuth – Land of Condiments, 2019*



*Mechelle Bounpraseuth – Yakult, 2019*

Mechelle Bounpraseuth is an artist who lives in Sydney, Australia. She creates art inspired by her family (from Laos) and the food they ate when she was younger. She says 'every bottle, every jar reminds me of them'. Mechelle Bounpraseuth is interested in exploring her culture and past by celebrating the food she ate with her family growing up.

Mechelle Bounpraseuth chooses to sculpt her bottles and objects from clay. She draws them first then starts to build them. Finally she paints them to carefully show the labels and details. Why do you think she uses clay? What other materials could she use to make her artwork?



Food artist Mechelle Bounpraseuth doesn't make her objects 'perfect' when she creates them from clay. Sometimes they look quite wonky, child-like or like they are leaning. It may be important for the artist that her food sculptures look hand-made. When she talks about her artwork, she describes her memories of growing up and the food she used to eat as a child:

*As a kid we always knew when we were having Pho for lunch because the process started early in the morning. I'd wake up to a huge pot bubbling away on the stove top. As the morning passed the smell of pho broth wafted through the house making your mouth water and your belly rumble.*

How do you think the style of Mechelle Bounpraseuth's food sculptures show that she was inspired by her memories of food growing up? Think about how the artist has made her work seem child-like.



Mechelle Bounpraseuth creates her food art with a playful, fun style. She presents her 'food' on plates as she would have eaten them as a child. Look at the way she has presented the ceramic biscuits on the plate below! She has also used bright colours (such as a pink plate) and a clear glaze. The clear glaze makes the work look glossy – making us want to pick it up and eat it. A good word to describe the food art by Mechelle Bounpraseuth is 'tactile'.

Although we know the ceramic food objects are not real, the artist has included some details to add elements of realism to her work. Look at the textures in the biscuits which have been incised into the clay and the sprinkles that have been added on, or all of the words that have been included on the ceramic condiment bottles. It is almost as if the artist is sculpting her memories of the food instead of a real object in front of her.



*Mechelle Bounpraseuth – Assorted Biscuits, 2018*



*Mechelle Bounpraseuth – Onion Rings, 2019*



*Mechelle Bounpraseuth – Hot Bread Bakery, 2018*