



are used at different stages of the work.

The making process begins by wedging various amounts of wooden shavings, olive pulp or peat-moss into the clay body. After the firing the body is not only much lighter, but its surface is uneven and irregular. Merom does not use glaze but adds amounts of sand, coffee grounds and seaweed to the piece while still on the wheel. Later more organic matter is wrapped around the finished work and a solution of copper carbonate or copper oxide is applied to selected areas to further enrich surface colour. These additions create patches of muted shades from pale pink to red and brown with wisps of green in between. Although working in a free and spontaneous way, the application of the organic and inorganic matter is based on extensive experiments and keen observation.

Two shapes dominate Merom's current work. An upright, sturdy jar resting comfortably on a large base may reach up to eighty centimetres in height. Straight walls taper slightly inward and the neck is emphasised by a strong collar. It is a vigorous pot, which is never completely symmetrical as it is built slightly off centre.

The second shape is a type of platter, either wheel thrown or slab built. Some works are large, heavy and almost flat. Their rims are usually jagged with indentations often crossing the form terminating in deep cracks. Merom

exploits the greater surface of the platters, where expressive gestures of the hand can be made. Pots and platters alike have a grainy surface that alternates between fine and sandy to rough and cracked like crusts of dry land. Platters are reminiscent of geological reliefs, upon which light and shadow spread in dramatic effects.

Merom experiments with mixed media. Glass is placed in pools and grooves (intended) or cracks (unintended) and, when melted, invigorates the colour of the metals giving vivid patches of green and turquoise. Sometimes a leaf or branch is placed between two pieces of glass. Sheets of metal are specially shaped for the heavy platters with deep cracks as supports and then fired together.

Contrary to common pottery practice the tall jars do not extend an invitation to be touched, nor the platters to be held in the hand. Their asymmetry instils a clear sense of movement and they are best appreciated on a turning table, where their imperfect shape unfolds and the intricacies of the surface can be appreciated in their entirety. **CR**

For more details: www.camon.co.il/hilda-merom

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Saggari pot, H25 x Ø18cm | Saggari pot, H38 x 10cm | Saggari pot, H40 x 22cm | Saggari pot, H20 x Ø18cm | Detail, Saggari pot.