

The Art of Translucent Ceramic Jewelry: Exploring Bone China and Natural Imprint Technique*



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Abstract

This research explores the development of translucent ceramic jewelry using Bone China clay and imprint techniques with natural materials such as rice, rice husks, and rice bags. The aim is to enhance the design and aesthetic qualities of ceramic jewelry. The study investigates the properties of Bone China, known for its translucency, lightweight nature, and durability, making it suitable for innovative jewelry design. The research has three main objectives: 1) to study the properties of translucent ceramics 2) to create translucent ceramic jewelry inspired by the Lamphu flower, and 3) to present a craft design concept for creating translucent ceramic jewelry collections based on hand making process. The scope of this study focuses on the Bang Lamphu and Khao San Road areas, rich in cultural heritage. The research culminates in a collection titled "Recall Lumphu," which features four jewelry pieces: a necklace, earrings, a ring, and a brooch. The results confirm that the combination of Bone China with natural materials can produce distinct textures and visual effects, effectively capturing and reflecting light.

The research results were found as follows; 1. the properties of translucent ceramics, specifically Bone China clay, which can be used to create unique jewelry. By combining clay with other materials like rice, rice husks, and rice bags, the researchers can develop distinct textures and visual effects. 2. The Lamphu flower-inspired translucent ceramic jewelry showcases the potential for expressing cultural symbols and personal expression. The research also highlights the role of jewelry in storytelling and cultural appreciation in urban landscapes. 3. Presenting a craft design concept for translucent ceramic jewelry collections based on hand-making processes, promoting artistic expression. The research also highlights the cultural narratives embedded in the designs, encouraging creativity and appreciation for local heritage. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, including literature review and field data collection, to explore community life in Bang Lamphu and Khao San, Thailand. Using "The 7 Community Tools," the researcher examined how traditional craftsmanship integrates into

*Received February 18, 2025; Revised March 17, 2025; Accepted March 24, 2025

contemporary jewelry design, appealing to both cultural preservationists and modern art enthusiasts.

Keywords: Translucent Ceramic; Jewelry; Bone China; Imprint Technique; Natural Material

Introduction

The art of ceramics has a rich historical lineage, evolving from functional items like cups and plates to contemporary forms of artistic expression, including ceramic jewelry. Ceramics, crafted from natural raw materials, have been part of human culture since prehistoric times, often embodying both practical and symbolic significance. Their diverse applications range from ceremonial objects found in graves to everyday items used in various cultural rituals, underscoring their importance in human history (Khianprasoet, 2023). The unique properties of ceramics—such as heat resistance, aesthetic appeal, and durability—make them a favored medium in the design industry, particularly within the highly competitive ceramic sector. In this context, identifying innovative formats that offer unique value is essential. Such exploration not only fosters creativity but also contributes to the transfer of knowledge and the expansion of national craftsmanship (Sarakasetrin, 2015). Contemporary ceramists continue to push boundaries, using materials like porcelain to create intricate three-dimensional works that captivate audiences. A notable example is Bone China, a hybrid porcelain developed by Joseph Spode in the late 18th century that revolutionized the pottery industry with its exceptional whiteness and translucency (Lane, 2003).

The intersection of traditional craftsmanship and modern innovation is particularly evident in the realm of jewelry design. Recent trends show a growing interest in ceramic materials, with international fashion brands increasingly incorporating ceramics into their collections (Dechrat, 2017). This shift highlights the potential of ceramics to serve not only as functional items but also as valuable artistic expressions in the fashion industry. The Banglampoo district, rich in cultural heritage and skilled craftsmanship, serves as an ideal backdrop for this exploration. The district is known for its beautiful landscape, which is shaded by the 'Lumphu' tree and adorned with flashing fireflies at night. During the historical resettlement of Thonburi, around 10,000 Khmer laborers were employed to dig an enormous canal for the expansion of Phranakorn. The canal, later called Klong Rob Krung, was used to create the city. The area is home to government officials, aristocrats, and craftsmen. The district is also home to a mixture of nationalities, including Malaysian goldsmiths and Chinese traders. The art of crafting gold was passed down through generations, but advancements in technology led to a decline in handcrafters (Banglampoo Museum, 2018). The area's history, marked by the aesthetic beauty of the Lumphu tree and the enchanting presence of fireflies, inspires a unique collection of translucent ceramic jewelry.

This research aims to utilize Bone China clay and experiment with natural materials such as rice, rice husks, and rice bags, employing imprint techniques to create textures that reflect light and evoke memories of the local landscape. By delving into the properties of Bone China and its potential as an alternative material in jewelry design, this study seeks to uncover new avenues for artistic expression. According to Xiao, and Puman (2014), contemporary jewelry culture often views connecting to personal or cultural origins as nostalgic, but instead, we find ourselves in a world of shifting frameworks. Creative practitioners navigate this world, exploring utopian ideals and embracing unique crafts and objects. The resulting jewelry pieces will not only embody aesthetic qualities but also serve as cultural artifacts that connect wearers to the stories and memories embedded in the Banglampoo area. Through this research, we aim to highlight the significance of ceramic jewelry as a medium for storytelling and creative expression, fostering appreciation for the rich cultural narratives inherent in this unique locale.

Objectives of the Research

1. To study the properties of translucent ceramics
2. To create translucent ceramic jewelry inspired by the Lamphu flower,
3. To present a craft design concept for creating translucent ceramic jewelry collections based on hand making process.

Research Methodology

The researcher employed a mixed-methods with the following details:

The study employed a four-step method, including:

The 1st Step: Information Collection: Through literature review and field data collections have gathered information about the history, significance, and types of Bang Lamphu and Khao San neighborhoods. Bang Lamphu is a district in Thailand that houses commercial trade areas and seven residential communities. The district is known for its beautiful landscape, which is shaded by the 'Lumphu' tree and adorned with flashing fireflies at night. During the historical resettlement of Thonburi, around 10,000 Khmer laborers were employed to dig an enormous canal for the expansion of Phranakorn. The canal, later called Klong Rob Krung, was used to create the city. The area is home to government officials, aristocrats, and craftsmen. The district is also home to a mixture of nationalities, including Malaysian goldsmiths and Chinese traders. The art of crafting gold was passed down through generations, but advancements in technology led to a decline in handcrafters (Banglampoo Museum, 2018). Today, Bang Lamphu is still lively with colorful signage and numerous shopping options. It is also a center for tourists with budget accommodations and entertainment options. Despite changes, the footprints of glory in Bang Lamphu remain, attracting people from around the world to experience its rich history.

The researcher has collected information about the local community that still associates the Bang Lamphu area with 1. Lamphu trees 2. Lamphu flowers 3. Fireflies 4. Rice



Figure 1: Blooming Lumphu Flower

Source: Fasaiwonmai, and Month, 2011



Figure 2: Budding Lumphu Flower

Source: Personal Documentation, 2023

The 2nd Step: Survey and Analysis Method: The researcher collects and analyzes data using "The 7 Community Tools," a set of anthropological tools designed to help understand community life. The tools consist of seven pieces: geo-social mapping, a genogram, a community organization chart, local health systems, a community calendar, local history, and life stories. Each tool reveals various aspects of community life, making the learning process more enjoyable. (Chuengsatiensup, 2002). The researcher uses the Local History from the Community 7 tools to understand community experiences through stories from the past, then develops the data and idea by representing ceramic jewelry in artistic terms.

Inspired by Traditional Craftsmanship Building on the cultural narratives of the Bang Lamphu area, this research explores how traditional cultural motifs and techniques can be integrated into contemporary jewelry design, appealing to both cultural preservationists and contemporary art.

Conceptual Framework

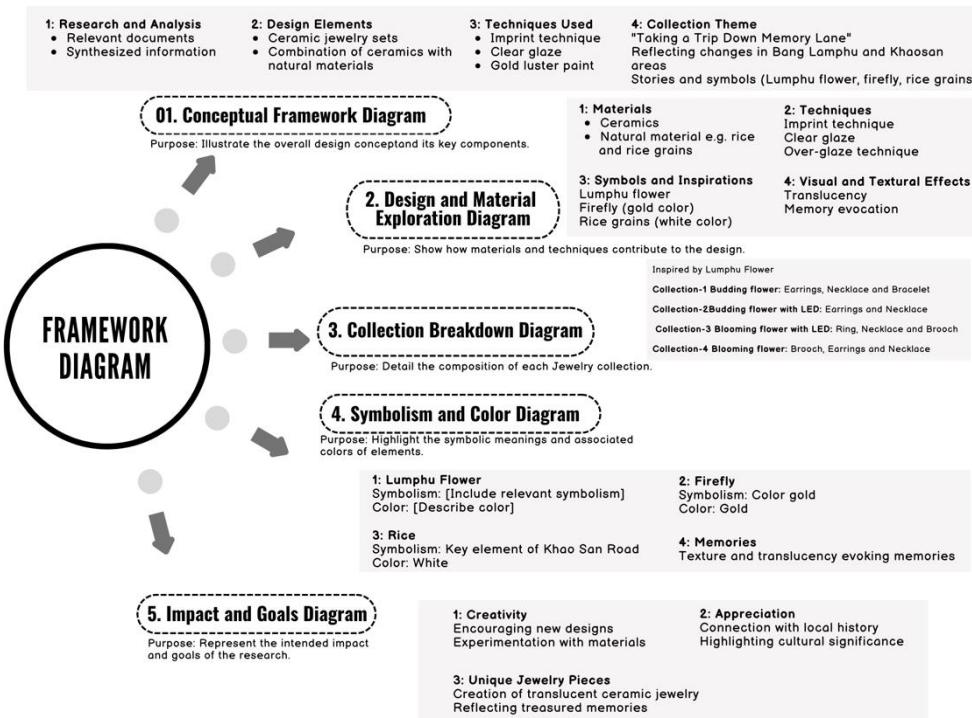


Figure 3: Research Process Framework

Source: Author, 2024

The 3rd Step: Design Process: The "Recall Lumphu" collection of translucent ceramic jewelry serves as a vital exploration of the cultural narratives embedded in the Bang Lamphu and Khao San areas of Bangkok. By drawing inspiration from local symbols such as the Lumphu flower, fireflies, and rice grains, this collection aims to reconnect contemporary society with cherished stories from the past. The integration of translucent ceramics and natural materials not only fosters a sense of cultural heritage but also promotes creativity in modern artistic expressions. According to Xiao and Puman (2014) asserted that contemporary jewelry design has emerged as a significant topic in contemporary art, serving as a means of expression. Jewelry artists have been actively exploring and practicing various elements of jewelry, such as material, technique, craftsmanship, and thoughts that stem from creative debate and investigation of social and cultural issues.

3.1 The process involves transforming reality into a modified form, using geometric forms as guidelines for the shape.

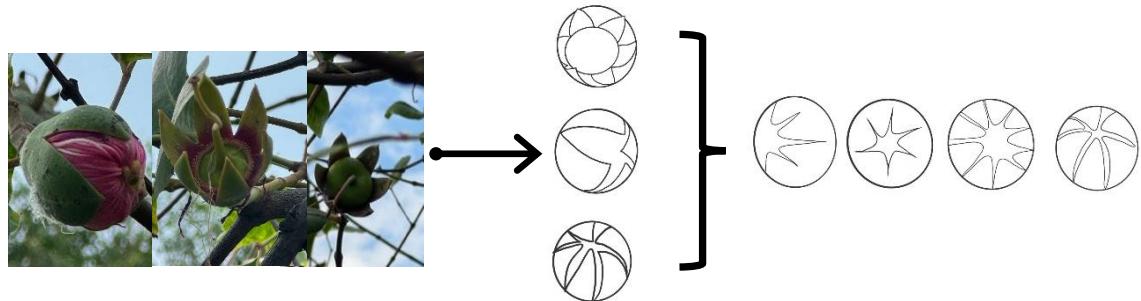


Figure 4: Budding Lumphu Flower Pattern Transform

Source: Personal Modification, 2024

3.2 The process involves transforming reality into a modified form, using freeform forms as guidelines for the shape.

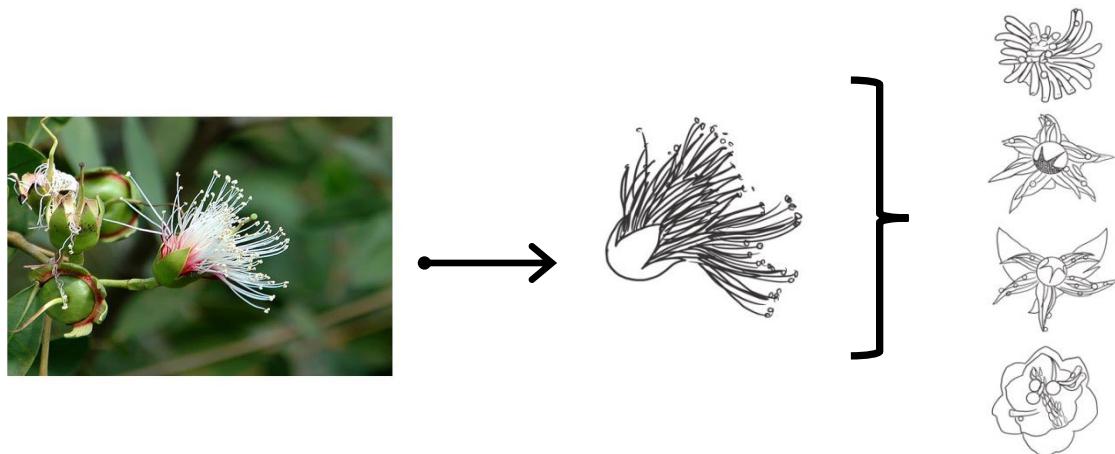


Figure 5: Blooming Lumphu Flower Pattern Transform

Source: Personal Modification, 2024

The 4th Step: Experimentation using a Practice-Based Method: The researcher uses craft-making as a research method to explore the relationship between material and individual consciousness, using physical interaction to stimulate artistic expression and assigning titles to each work. Nimkulrat (2012) used craft-making to create works focusing on the connection between materials and consciousness. The physical qualities of the materials influenced the interpretation, with each work's title reflecting the author's action-oriented experience.

4.1 The process of developing translucent ceramic jewelry using an imprint technique with natural materials has led to the creation of contemporary jewelry. The experiment focus is divided into two groups: texture (A, B, and C) and shape (D, E, and F). The experiment is as follows:

Texture: Rice (A), Rice Husk (B), and Rice Bag (C)

Shape: Flat (D), Line (E), and Layer (F)

4.1.1 Title of the work “Budding Lumphu flower collection 1”

Jewelry part: Mixings Texture & Shape:

Earrings C+D+E+F

Necklace C+D+E+F

Bracelet A+C+D+E+F



Figure 6: Budding Lumphu Flower Collection 1

Source: Author, 2024

4.1.2 Title of the work “Budding Lumphu flower collection 2 with LED”

Jewelry part: Mixings Texture & Shape:

Earrings A+C+D+E

Necklace A+C+D+E



Figure 7: Budding Lumphu Flower Collection 2 with LED

Source: Author, 2024

4.1.3 Title of the work “Blooming Lumphu flower collection 3 with LED” Jewelry part: Mixings Texture & Shape:

Ring A+B+D+E+F

Necklace A+B+D+E+F

Brooch A+B+D+E+F



Figure 8: Blooming Lumphu Flower Collection 3 with LED

Source: Author, 2024

4.1.4 Title of the work “Blooming Lumphu flower collection 4”

Jewelry part: Mixings Texture & Shape:

Brooch A+B+D+E+F

Earrings A+B+D+E+F

Necklace A+B+D+E+F

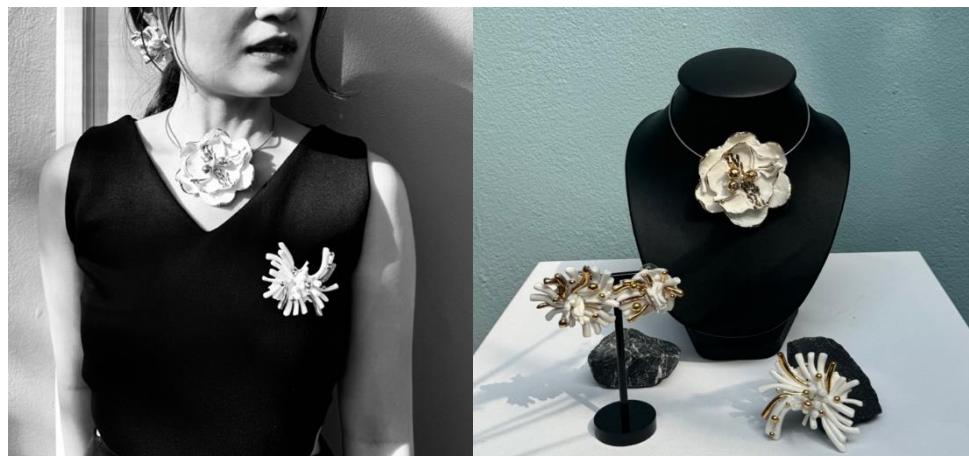


Figure 9: Blooming Lumphu Flower Collection 4

Source: Author, 2024

Research Result

The 1st objective is to study the properties of translucent ceramics. From the research, it was found that Bone China clay, known for its translucency, lightweight, and durability, is a suitable material for creating unique ceramic jewelry.

Result about the translucent effect of “Budding Lumphu flower collection 1”: The translucent effect of light and texture from the rice bag is evident, despite the glaze-obsured texture, scratch texture, and rice.

Result about the translucent effect of “Budding Lumphu flower collection 2 with LED”: The translucent effect of the light and texture from the rice bag, as well as the scratch texture and rice, is visible. However, when compared to Collection 1, the texture of the rice bag and the unglazed Matt surface are clearly visible.

Result about the translucent effect of “Blooming Lumphu flower collection 3 with LED”: In this experiment, the researcher used clear glaze, which means that the imprint effect does not show up as clearly as it would on a piece without clear glaze.

Result about the translucent effect of “Blooming Lumphu flower collection 4”: The researcher is experimenting with line and layer to explore the impact of translucency on the transparency of a flat, rice husk imprint and layer, incorporating rice into a clay line.

The experiment showed that combining Bone China clay with alternative materials like rice, rice husks, and rice bags effectively creates distinct textures and visual effects. The imprints of these materials on the ceramic surfaces enhanced the aesthetic qualities and demonstrated Bone China's ability to capture and reflect light in innovative ways. The study also found that translucent ceramics, especially when combined with imprint techniques, offer significant potential for creating visually appealing and unique jewelry pieces. The interaction between light and translucency should be a focal point, with forms that highlight the material's ethereal quality.

The 2nd objective is to create translucent ceramic jewelry inspired by the Lamphu flower. From the research, it was found that the research also highlighted the potential for creating pieces that reflect cultural symbols and personal expression. The prototypes inspired by the Lamphu flower demonstrate the cultural relevance and artistic value that ceramic materials can achieve through innovative use. This research affirms the role of jewelry as a medium for storytelling and cultural appreciation in a rapidly evolving urban landscape. Cultural Narrative in Contemporary Jewelry, Fusion of Cultural Identity & Modern Aesthetics: The integration of Lumphu flower motifs and firefly symbolism showcases how contemporary ceramic jewelry can honor local heritage while appealing to modern design sensibilities. Jewelry as a Storytelling Medium: By incorporating gold elements to represent fireflies, the study highlights the historical and artistic continuity of craftsmanship, bridging past traditions with contemporary jewelry design. The researcher used one of the 7 tools, which is that local history life stories can help understand in-depth community life, appreciate common

humanity despite cultural differences, and develop humanistic sensibility. Overall, these tools are effective and enjoyable for community and development through artwork.

The 3rd objective is to present a craft design concept for creating translucent ceramic jewelry collections based on hand making process. From the research, it was found that the use of hand-building methods, such as coiling, slab construction, and pinching, allows for organic and fluid forms, giving each piece a unique artistic identity. Combining natural imprint techniques with hand-building enhances surface textures, creating jewelry with distinct patterns inspired by natural elements. Hand-Building as a Design Approach: The research validates hand-building techniques as a crucial method for creating organic, tactile jewelry that fosters a deep connection between the maker and the material. This study expands the boundaries of ceramic jewelry design by demonstrating how material innovation, hand-built techniques, and cultural narratives can shape new artistic and market-driven directions in the field. Hand-built translucent ceramic jewelry should emphasize craftsmanship over mass production, reinforcing the value of slow design and artisanal quality. The concept should align with themes of nature, organic textures, and individuality, appealing to consumers who value handmade and bespoke jewelry. According to Nimkulrat (2012) mentioned that the "physical interaction between material and maker stimulates artistic expression, guiding hands to gradually form the material into an object."

The New Body of Knowledge

The research article presents a new body of knowledge in transparent ceramic jewelry research, which includes material innovation, cultural integration, design and production techniques, market research, and industry positioning. The research focuses on Bone China clay and natural materials, gold accents, cultural integration, and hand-built methods. It also explores the use of local heritage and natural elements, storytelling workshops, and community engagement to preserve cultural heritage through jewelry. Design and production techniques include slow craft and ethical production, promoting small-batch production and aligning with sustainable and ethical design principles. The research also explores the importance of cultural collaboration and the potential for market expansion. Key elements of the research include material experimentation, hand-built and imprint techniques, goldsmith craftsmanship, and cultural research and design. The research procedures include material selection, prototype development, market research, and cultural collaboration. The benefits of this research include aesthetic uniqueness, translucency and texture innovation, cultural storytelling, sustainability, and market innovation. The model and guidelines include the material combination model, craft and culture integration model, slow design guidelines, and industry positioning framework. This structured representation provides a framework for further exploration, market positioning, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

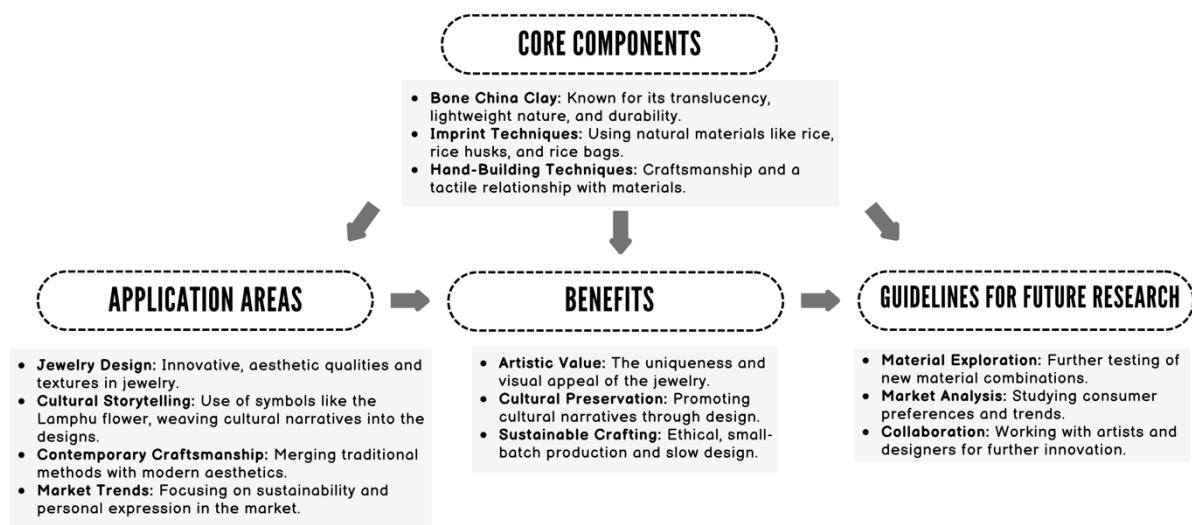


Figure 10: The New Body of Knowledge

Source: Author, 2025

Discussion of Research Results

From the research result of the 1st objective, to study the properties of translucent ceramics it was found that the research underscores the potential of Bone China's translucent qualities, especially when combined with imprint techniques, to produce jewelry that stands out visually. The successful combination of Bone China clay with natural materials—specifically rice and rice husks—validates the hypothesis that innovative materials can significantly enhance the properties of ceramic jewelry. The textures created through this synergy have been well-received, highlighting their potential for future design endeavors. This is also consistent with Jaisuda, and Thongngamkham (2022) mentioned bone-china clay ceramics as a substitute material for jewelry, providing a framework for designing, crafting, and refining jewelry using commercially viable alternative materials. This finding aligns with contemporary trends in fashion and jewelry, which increasingly value unique textures and materials, thereby opening new avenues for designers seeking to differentiate their work in a competitive market.

From the research result of the 2nd objective, it was found that utilizing Bone China clay alongside imprint techniques provides an exceptional opportunity to merge traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics. The research emphasizes the potential for creating pieces that not only embody cultural symbols but also reflect personal expression. This innovative use of ceramic materials demonstrates how contemporary jewelry can achieve cultural relevance and artistic value. The Lamphu flower-inspired prototypes exemplify this blend, showcasing the ability to convey deep cultural narratives while appealing to modern sensibilities. By Hogge (2017) unique flowerheads and vessels using porcelain, using a meticulous, instinctive, and visceral approach to ensure no two flowers are identical. Following another ceramist Cole (2005) artist who skilfully balances the art world with design, focusing

on the delicate balance between flora and art. Cole individually creates the light from completely hand-mastered porcelain flowers. The internal lamp gear illuminates the flowers. We can see through Jeremy Cole explored the relationship between flora and art with the mediums of ceramics and light.

From the research result of the 3rd objective, it was found that This discovery is particularly significant for creating an eagerness to explore new directions in ceramic jewelry. By strategically manipulating light and texture, these techniques add depth and intrigue to jewelry design, enhancing its overall aesthetic appeal. By Treadaway (2009) The Hodes case study highlights the importance of physical experience, particularly the hand, in influencing the development and selection of new ideas in her work, particularly those perceived through touch. Hand-making process: Hand-building clay is an ancient process, originating from prehistoric times. The simple motions of pushing and squeezing Rolling clay by hand feel instinctive and establish There is a strong bond between the creator and the material. There is also a sense of control over the material; the slow gradual pace of work allows for time for thought. Consideration as the form progresses (Taylor, 2011).

Conclusion

This research explored the potential of Bone China clay as a material for creating unique translucent ceramic jewelry due to its translucency, lightweight nature, and durability. The "Recall Lumphu" collection exemplifies this approach, honoring cultural narratives and personal expression. The researchers used gold to represent fireflies and the craftsmanship of goldsmiths, who skillfully crafted exquisite jewelry from it. The symbolic use of gold in this design stems from their ability to create intricate and elegant pieces. The research recommends ongoing exploration of material combinations, collaboration with the concept of contemporary ceramics, and development of production techniques. Analysis of the data collations and educational initiatives is also crucial for raising awareness of translucent ceramics' potential in jewelry design. Bone China's translucency, when combined with imprint techniques and natural materials like rice and rice husks, enhances the visual appeal and tactile experience of ceramic jewelry. Cultural integration and artistic expression are demonstrated by incorporating Lumphu flower motifs and firefly symbolism, demonstrating how ceramic jewelry can serve as a medium for storytelling and cultural preservation. Hand-building techniques foster a deep connection between the creator and the material, promoting slow craft and thoughtful design. These findings open new possibilities for collaboration with contemporary ceramic design, market expansion, and the promotion of translucent ceramic jewelry in contemporary ceramic designs. The research encourages further exploration of material combinations, production techniques, and educational initiatives to raise awareness and appreciation for ceramic jewelry as an innovative design field.

Suggestion

From the results of the research, the researcher has the suggestions as follows:

1. The suggestions from the research

From the research result of the 1st objective, it was found that Enhanced Material Utilization: Research effectively combines Bone China clay with natural materials such as rice, rice husks, and rice bags. This innovative material synergy enhances aesthetic qualities, including translucency, light reflection, and texture, making ceramic jewelry visually distinct and lightweight. Therefore, the related institute should apply as follows: The research suggests several recommendations for the future of translucent ceramic jewelry. It proposes further research on material combinations to improve the properties and aesthetics of the jewelry, as well as conducting market analysis and feasibility studies to understand consumer preferences and trends. The proposal also involves collaborating with fashion designers to integrate the jewelry into broader collections.

From the research result of the 2nd objective, it was found that the research incorporates local cultural narratives, such as the Lumphu flower and fireflies, into the jewelry design. Therefore, the related institute should apply as follows: This integration fosters appreciation for regional heritage while innovating contemporary jewelry. Collaborate with local artisans and cultural experts to ensure the accurate representation of heritage elements in jewelry design. Conduct community engagement programs, such as storytelling workshops and design collaborations, to further integrate cultural narratives into modern jewelry pieces.

From the research result of the 3rd objective, it was found that the use of imprint technique and hand-built with natural materials introduces unique textures and forms, expanding the potential for ceramic jewelry in artistic. Therefore, the related institute should apply as follows: present a craft design concept for translucent ceramic jewelry collections based on hand-making processes, promoting artistic expression. Encourage jewelry designers, ceramicists, and contemporary artists to explore hand-built methods to push creative boundaries, blending traditional craftsmanship with innovative jewelry design. Advocate for slow design principles by emphasizing the value of hand-built, small-batch production, aligning with the growing demand for sustainable and ethically crafted jewelry.

2. The suggestions for future research

The future research should involve the following issues:

2.1 To investigate new material combinations to enhance the durability, translucency, and aesthetics of ceramic jewelry, building on the findings of this research.

2.2 To conduct comparative studies between translucent ceramics and other innovative jewelry materials to position ceramics within the industry.

2.3 To examine consumer perception and cultural influences on translucent ceramic jewelry through interdisciplinary research combining design, anthropology, and market behavior studies.

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