

DESIGN FILE

Anji Connell

Myung Nam An

The South Korean ceramicist's 'Fresh Eyes' sculptures, inspired by Salvador Dali, make walls pop with colour.

Why did you move from South Korea to London and why ceramics? "Ceramics have always been close to my heart, having been surrounded by them growing up [in Gyeonggi, a province famous for this type of art]. After studying industrial craft design in Incheon, I went to Camberwell College of Arts [in London] in 2005 to do a BA in ceramics as it had such a great reputation. I loved living in London and stayed."

What inspired your Eye series? "The idea was born during my time at university, when I was interested in both the human figure and surrealism - [Spanish surrealist] Salvador Dali is an inspiration. [At first] I thought his work was just crazy and not 'art'; after looking at so much of his work, I still feel it's pretty crazy, but in a good way. [Late fashion designer] Alexander McQueen has also been a big inspiration to me."

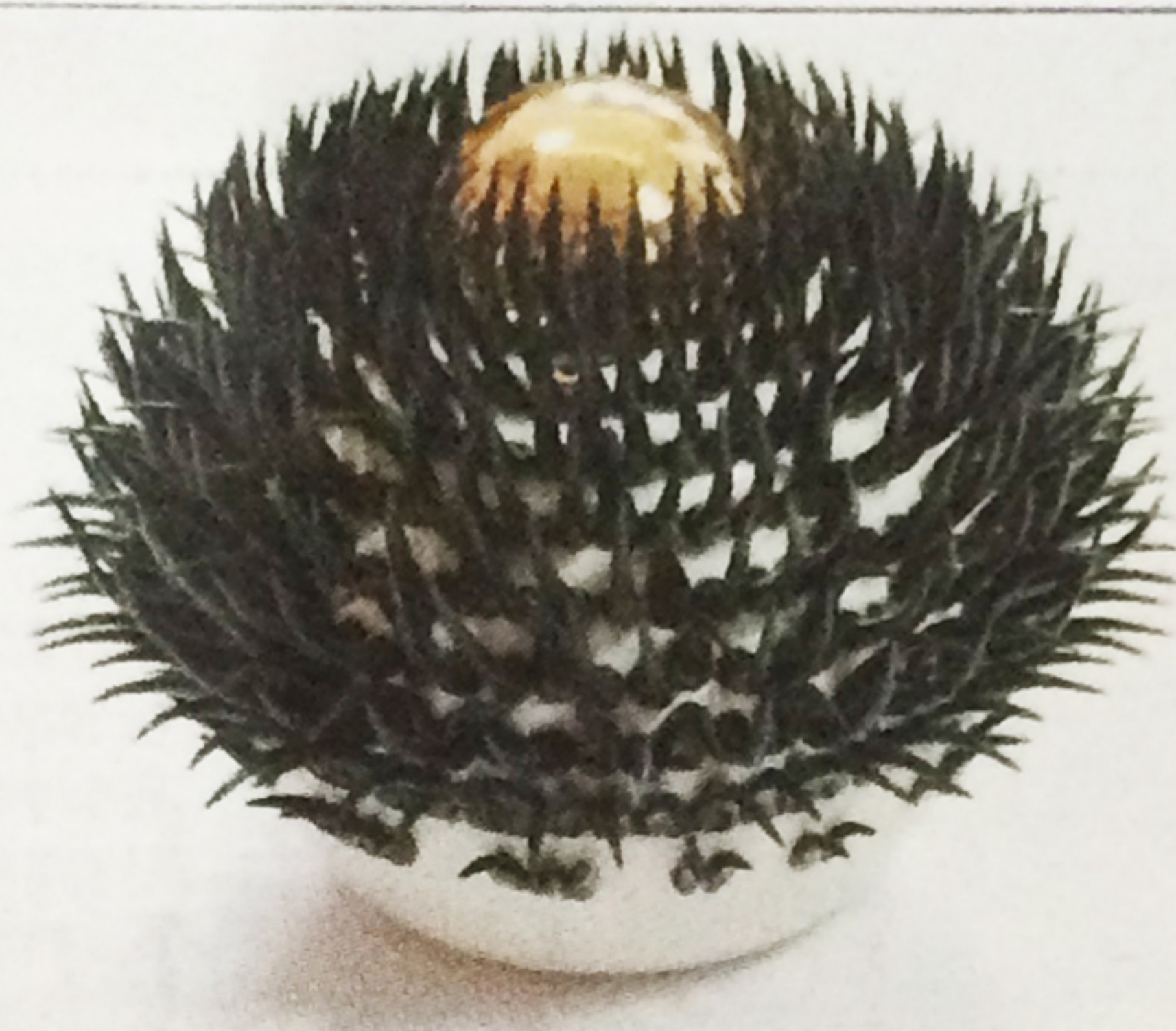
"Everyone's eyes are unique and I like that when you look

into a person's eye, you may understand more about them. I like to tell stories using symbols that are universal. I explore abstract, appropriated images from our culture and translate these onto the surface of my sculptures."

Where do people display your works? "People hang them on the wall in their homes, and often come back and add to their collection. You can hang one or group them. Some buyers have them displayed on shelves and sitting on tables. My customers tell me they liven up a monotone home."

"They are individualistic as you can pick the ones you like and place them in your home where you feel they look best. I have them on the [staircase] walls going up to my bedroom and in my bedroom as well as my living room."

Your new works are inspired by insects. Why? "We have a garden at home, and I do the gardening; it's my meditation.



Above: Korean artist Myung Nam An.

Above left: one of her "Fresh Eyes" sculptures.

I like to study the relationship between flowers and insects such as butterflies and beetles. Every insect, to me, is amazing, even cockroaches. They are incredibly intricate, detailed, beautiful, bright, colourful, exciting, funky and very necessary. Without them we wouldn't have such beautiful flowers to decorate our lives, and, if you like flowers but hate insects, well, you're extremely unfair to nature."

You haven't exhibited in your home country yet; why not? "I'm still looking for the right gallery."

Myung Nam An's sculptures are available at Art Projects Gallery, PMQ, 35 Aberdeen Street, Central, tel: 3485 5336.