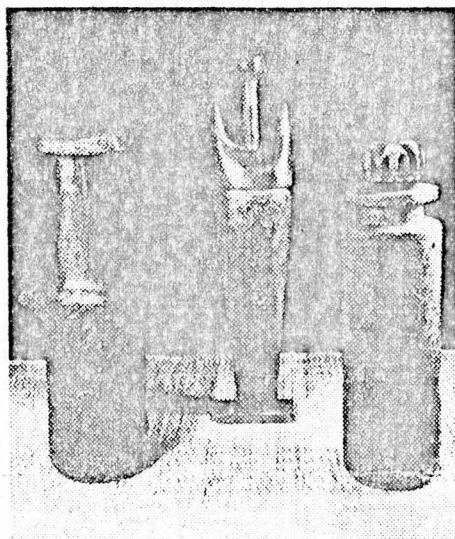


CERAMICS INTO SCULPTURE

THE exhibition of ceramics by Idit Ady at Batsheva Arts and Crafts (9 Frug Street Tel Aviv) is of more than usual interest. Most of the pieces are rather abstract sculpture than functional ceramics and are austere in form and colour and strong in their simplicity of outline. Even when on the small side, these pieces have a feeling of dignity, and, at times, even of monumentality. Occasionally a free, incised design decorates the surface but most of the time the form is allowed to speak for itself. The material out of which they are shaped is coarse (chamot), mostly with a grainy, rough surface somewhat reminiscent of medieval stoneware. The series of large jars (greyish-black) with modelled stoppers is particularly impressive as are some ornaments, a play of geometric shapes and there are some large bowls, rather flat, in earth colours, partly glazed which are finely proportioned. These pieces would be particularly suitable for display in a patio or terrace as they have a rough quality which demands "air."

Utilitarian items such as lamp bases and deep pots for plants are also shown. There are also a number of figurines, delicately coloured, a sort of sophisticated version of folk art which is not to my particular taste. Wall decorations in which coloured glazes are combined with matt surfaces have stylized heads as centrepieces which call to mind pre-Columbian art.

Idit Ady was born in Buenos Aires and studied painting sculpture and ceramics in the Argentine and had her own work-



Ceramics by Ady

shop in the capital. She came to Israel in 1956 and settled in Nir Itzhak in the western Negev, returning to the Argentine a few years ago for further study. This is her first exhibition in Israel.

for the last 10 years and studied at the Art School of the Museum of Modern Art in Sao Paulo (Brazil) and then for four years at the Avni Institute in Tel Aviv. Unlike most graduates of the Avni Institute, she is a figurative painter who is interested neither in what is fashionable nor what is experimental. Her work greatly resembles that of Esther Peretz, not only in the choice of subject, mainly slum children with wan faces, but in the way she composes her paintings and the general low-toned colour schemes with occasional use of a rather hard red.

Lea Levin clearly views her groups of children or single figures with compassion that does not always keep safely this side of sentimentality. She handles her brush with confidence and vivacity and is a sound draughtsman, but already evident in her work is a tendency to exploit a formula — the big dark eyes, the turned down mouth, the hanging arms, all indicating the waif — and since her work is eminently saleable, this could develop into mechanical repetition. This would be a pity as canvases, such as the woman resting her head on her arms, or the "Clown" show that as well as natural facility, she has artistic intelligence.

SARAH WILKINSON

TER THE JERUSALEM POST

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