

Simon interviewing Michele Brady, potter

Simon: So, Michele, I am here in your pottery.

Michele: Yes.

Simon: Surrounded by.

Michele: Pots.

Simon: Lots of them. Yeah, tell us who you are, what you do, and how you came to be in this particular corner of Brittany.

Michele: Well, my name is Michele Brady, and um, I came to this part of Brittany in three years ago. Where we are right now is a mill which used to be a flour mill, and it was a functioning flour mill up till the year 2,000.

Simon: Okay.

Michele: And there are all the machines are still in the mill.

Simon: In the mill house?

Michele: Yes.

Simon: Wow.

Michele: On the other side.

Simon: Wow.

Michele: And, er the room we are in at the moment was, this was storage for all the flour, so I've set up my pottery in this bit. My kilns are in the side where all the machines were.

Simon: Right. So, okay, so you've been here three, you said.

Michele: Three years.

Simon: Three years.

Michele: Three years.

Simon: And so what brought you here, and where were you before?

Michele: Um, so we came here because I was living in Guérande before on the coast and I had started becoming a professional potter in 2018.

Simon: Uh hum.



Michele: And I was selling my pots in a salorge which is a warehouse for salt.

Simon: Right.

Michele: And, which I was renting, and I was selling the salt of a friend who is a paludier and it was all working very, very well but I wanted, we wanted to move but stay in that area.

Simon: Right.

Michele: And get a bigger studio so that I could actually, because I give classes.

Simon: Right.

Michele: So I wanted a space where I could give classes and sell my pottery that I wasn't renting. So, er, we were looking for houses and by accident we just kind of fell across the ad for this place, but the place just kind of, if anybody wants, they can come and visit and its pretty amazing.

Simon: Yeah.

Michele: There's a river, there's a mill. We have the house here as well. And, so I give classes here.

Simon: Right.

Michele: Um, people come on a Thursday. You can see the wheels.

Simon: Oh yeah, yeah.

Michele: There. Um, so I give the classes in French but I have English students as well.

Simon: Right.

Michele: I also sell my pottery here. There is a little corner where I display my pottery but I mostly sell at pottery markets.

Simon: Okay.

Michele: In and around Brittany.

Simon: Right.

Michele: A lot of the work that you can see here is students 'work.

Simon: Okay.



- Michele: So I really enjoy doing that. And then we are also going to develop, we do exhibitions here as well. Last summer we had a photographer who lives in Guern.
- Simon: Uh hum.
- Michele: Who came in and took photos of the mill.
- Simon: Right.
- Michele: Of the machinery and the mill.
- Simon: Ah.
- Michele: In black and white.
- Simon: Wonderful.
- Michele: Which was pretty stunning so we showed his photos. We had another friend who's an ornithologist, he's Irish, as well. Yeah, he does watercolours.
- Simon: Right.
- Michele: So we had, showed them.
- Simon: Oh, cool.
- Michele: And we did, last year we did the Journees du Patrimoine.
- Simon: Uh hum.
- Michele: And we had lots of visitors come to see the mill. We explained a little bit about how it used to work.
- Simon: Uh hum.
- Michele: And so the idea is to develop the mill, the space.
- Simon: Yup.
- Michele: Share it with other people, do classes.
- Simon: Right.
- Michele: People who give classes.
- Simon: Yeah.
- Michele: In yoga or painting, or.
- Simon: That's a great idea.



Michele: You know, because we have the space, we have a lovely space that we can kind of rent out.

Simon: Yeah.

Michele: And, that we just kind of make the mill live again.

Simon: Yeah, yeah.

Michele: And bring a bit of life back to the place.

Simon: So how did you come to, you said you became a professional potter just three years ago, or?

Michele: No, 2018.

Simon: 2018. So what did you do before then and how did you come to be a potter.

Michele: Okay, well I was living in Paris, I moved to Paris in 1995, a long, long, a long time ago, for a year.

Simon: Uh hum.

Michele: And I ended up staying 20 plus years there.

Simon: Wow.

Michele: Er, I started doing pottery when I was in Paris.

Simon: Right.

Michele: I just went to the evening classes, well, it was day classes for me because I worked in the evening.

Simon: Yeah.

Michele: So, just once a week and was bitten by the pottery bug.

Simon: Yeah, yeah.

Michele: And bought a little wheel that I set up in my flat and then it just started to take up more and more of my time and I rented a space in the studio of Fabien Gille in Montreuil in Paris, and I used to spend my days making pottery and in the evenings I worked in a lawyers 'firm.

Simon: Okay,

Michele: Which paid very well but was only five hours in the evening.

Simon: Right.



Michele: So it left me all the day.

Simon: Yeah, yeah, that's quite a good arrangement.

Michele: To do what I wanted to do which became pottery.

Simon: Yeah, yeah.

Michele: And then in 2018 I took the jump and I left my job and set up a pottery in Guérande, gave classes, sold my pottery. It worked really well.

Simon: So are you doing, so you're doing classes on a Thursday?

Michele: Yes.

Simon: All this obviously we'll point people to your website from the page. And you are talking about other events that you will host here. So, art events.

Michele: Yes.

Simon: Are you going to do residential things, or?

Michele: That could be a possibility, yes. It's all, we're working it out bit by bit.

Simon: Yes.

Michele: But yeah, that could possibly be a possibility. Yes.

Simon: Great. Thank you.