

COPENHAGEN CERAMICS

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Press Release:

Bodil Manz and Bente Skjøttgaard : Cuts and Interventions
2 – 25 February 2012.

Wheel-Tracks in Clay Meet Sampled Porcelain

Opposites will meet when Bodil Manz and Bente Skjøttgaard, two of Denmark's well awarded ceramists, convene in their upcoming exhibition, 'Cuts and Interventions'. They belong to different generations and traditions, but for this show, they have decided to explore possible common denominators. The result can be seen and experienced from February 2 – 25 at Copenhagen Ceramics, the new gallery for contemporary ceramics in Copenhagen.

In their first ever co-exhibition, two of Denmark's very distinct artistic profiles have decided to explore possible common denominators in their otherwise very contrasting work. The title of the show, 'Cuts and Interventions' is referring to the characteristic manner, in which both ceramists are handling materials and working-processes.

Bodil Manz, world renowned for her paper-thin cylinders in porcelain, sets out to investigate her own ceramic history. She takes her casting- moulds, used for earlier works, to pieces and re-uses and re-interpretes these shapes and tools into new works that are sampled and juxtaposed with completely new form-parts, as kinds of traces from her studio through time. In other works she arrives at new graphic ornaments on her porcelain cylinders, inspired by the jumble of squared off-cut-shapes gathering around on the floor during her job of applying transfers, ceramic colour and laquer, to the glazed clay body. 'Recycling of my own work', these pieces might be called, she reflects.

In this process Bodil Manz, in a poetic manner, puts a stop to parts of her former work, yet opens doors to a new universe that organically grows out of her life-long investigations into the material.

The works of Bodil Manz are characterized by their strong graphic patterns, often geometrically based, that bear witness to her mastery of a refined material and an aesthetically sovereign, contemporary interpretation of a modernist heritage.

Is it OK to drive on the wall?

Bente Skjøttgaard investigates other options for a contemporary ornament. Is it OK to drive on the wall? she asks, and answers by intervening with the soft, sensual material by running her Fiat Multipla car with Pirelli P7 tyres slowly through the clay, leaving a simple and direct imprint in the oblong mass of slapped-on stoneware clay. A decorative frieze with an easily recognizable ornament of our time. Through the subsequent glazing and firing to 1280 degrees C, the friezes transform and may acquire variations in character. The series of Frieze P7, however, are not expressive or violent – rather they invite quiet reflection.

This work follows up on a previous work of hers from 2011. On the ground, by the ancient road 'Hærvejen', running through Jutland, she has installed a large 40 sq. meter clay relief, in which she let a group of young cattle set their hoof imprints in the clay, as a tribute to the ancient trade of cattle on the road. Obviously, this gesture also refers to the large ceramic relief by Asger Jorn from 1959, at Århus Statsgymnasium, a work in which he, during its execution, took a ride on his scooter across the wet clay.

Bente Skjøttgaard has made her name as a fearless handler of the ceramic material, expressive and generous. She continuously rediscovers and reinvents the very qualities of clay itself; first magically demonstrating its malleability and later carrying on her playful approach, utilizing with great imagination and humour anything that can happen in the transformational process of glazing and the subsequent firing of the work.

Both artists have exhibited widely internationally with work represented in important museum collections worldwide. They have received numerous awards, and both have participated in the prestigious Gyeonggi International Biennale (formerly World Ceramic Biennale) in the Republic of South Korea, Bodil Manz winning the Grand Prize here in 2007. Bente Skjøttgaard received the Annie and Otto Johs. Detlefs Ceramic Prize in 2005.

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More information at www.copenhagenceramics.com, where press photos and press release can be downloaded.

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Wednesday — Friday: 1 – 6 pm
Saturday: 12 am – 4 pm