

Postscript and documentation to the catalogue of the exhibition AIC 2000 in Frechen

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“Postscript and documentation to the catalogue of the exhibition AIC 2000 in Frechen”

Rudolf Schnyder

Almost 20 years ago the Keramik-Freunde der Schweiz published the catalogue of the exhibition “Miniature Ceramics” in their Mitteilungsblatt Nr. 97. “Miniature Ceramics” was an exhibition of the IAC, in which works of IAC-members were shown in Kyoto (1980), Paris (1981), Lausanne and Budapest (1982).

It was for the first time, that such a broad survey was given over contemporary ceramics with works of masters who were among the best ceramists in their countries and who had an international reputation. And above all in Budapest it was the first time since World War II, that contemporary western art was shown behind the iron curtain. This exhibition invited the visitor to think about the great variety of ceramics and about regional differences in a global framework. The fact, that only small pieces – miniatures of less than 20 x 20 x 20 cm – were allowed to be exhibited, had no restricting effect on the imagination and the diversity of forms, techniques and materials. On the contrary, the result of the exhibition was so convincing, that its concept was further developed. This led to the first World Triennale of small ceramics in Zagreb in 1984.

According to the catalogue 107 artists from 20 countries participated in the exhibition: 45 from Japan, 51 from Western Europe (Belgium 3, Denmark 2, Germany 8, England 2, France 10, Italy 3, Scotland 1, Switzerland 14, Sweden 1, Spain 7), 3 from Eastern Europe (Rumania 1, Czechoslovakia 1, Hungary 1), 3 from USA and 1 from Argentina, Australia, India, Canada and Venezuela respectively.

Among the artists whom we encounter in the catalogue of 1982 there are 23 whom we see again in the catalogue of the year 2000: From Japan Sueharu Fukami, Yasuo Hayashi, Satoru Hoshino, Keiji Ito, Kenji Kato, Zendji Miyashita, Kimiyo Mishima, Taimei Morino, Setsuko Nagasawa, Jumpei Sugie and Asuka Tsuboi; from Europe Jean Bersoux (F), Maria Bofill (Sp), Carlos Carle (I),

Elena Colmeiro (Sp), Jean-Claude de Crousaz (CH), Carmen Dionyse (B), Tony Franks (GB), Madola (Sp), Enrique Mestre (Sp), Gerd Hiort Petersen (Dk), Ulla Viotti (S), Maja von Rotz (CH); from Australia Janet Mansfield.

In their case we have the interesting opportunity to compare their former work with what they do today and to measure the long way they have covered in the meantime.

Otherwise, though, the field of participants has been renewed and extended since 1982. In the catalogue of the exhibition of the year 2000, which was shown in the Keramion Frechen, works of 120 artists are listed. This time there were no limits set concerning the measurements of the exhibits, and the artists took advantage of this liberty in an interesting way. – Represented were not less than 36 nationalities, among them Asia with 23 masters (19 from Japan and 1 from China, Korea, Iran and Israel each); 80 from Europe (Belgium 5, Denmark 5, Germany 17, England 4, Estonia 1, France 4, Greece 1, Holland 4, Ireland 1, Italy 2, Latvia 3, Norway 1, Austria 2, Poland 3, Scotland 1, Sweden 1, Switzerland 5, Spain 7, Czechia 1, Turkey 2, Hungary 4); 15 from America (USA 8, Canada 4, Mexico 1, Jamaica 1, Venezuela 1, Argentina 1); 2 from Africa (Nigeria 1, Tunis 1); 3 from Australia and 1 from New Zealand.

The work of the artists who also exhibited twenty years ago has, on the whole, become freer, more generous and spatial than it was in 1982. This is a result not only of the larger superficial dimensions but also of the inner stature, a fact that is particularly evident in the work of the Japanese artists: Sueharu Fukami’s “Wave” vibrates freely in space like a flying object, and Yasuo Hayashi’s objects are now more optical than plastic, i. e. they are objects that suggest feigned spaces. Satoru Hoshino’s “Ancient Tree” should be regarded against the back-

ground of his monumental installations of "Tree Visions" such as have been exhibited in recent exhibitions: Zendji Miyashita has developed into a creator of visions of wide mountain landscapes; Taimei Morino has turned his attention to block-like receptacles with mysterious contents; Keiji Ito now works with the form of the simple, still, structured cube as an image of the mountain, and Jumpei Sugie's 1982 architectural model has been replaced by a honeycomb structure. Asuka Tsuboi's trompe-l'oeils of elegant, fashionable accessories have yielded to illustrations of how jewellery can crown the forms of a soft feminine body, and Kimiyo Mishima has abandoned trompe-l'oeils of crumpled newspapers in favour of newspapers tied up neatly for the garbage collection. The work of Setsuko Nagasawa has developed from finely fractionated structure studies into large-scale spatial volumes. The great Japanese tradition of ceramic vessels, on the other hand, continues to be represented by Taroemon Nakazato, Karatsu's "National Treasure", and Kenji Kato.

The work of Western artists has also gained in profile and expanded in the direction of space and the landscape: Maria Bofill's ring labyrinths, for example, are definitely a step above the sphere with a bow that she exhibited in 1982; Enrique Mestre uses finer instruments for his measurements of space than he did with his angular wall of 1982; Tony Franks' recent works, inspired by the Scottish landscape, strike out into an entirely new dimension; and Carmen Dionyse, who exhibited a small scarred head in 1982, now shows a portrayal of Spring with a young, intact face bursting forth from its sheath. Elena Colmeiro's 1982 exhibit was a rising spiral form, this time it is a sculpture consisting of three upright slabs. Janet Mansfield's 1982 contribution was a cylindrical box, now it is a powerful, unglazed jar. Gerd Hiort Petersen-Andersen's 1982 exhibit was an oval box, this time it is a sea urchin; Jean-Claude de Crousaz has exchanged a rhinoceros for a lobster; Maja von Rotz has abandoned her tree trunk in favour of a still life, and Jean Bersoux's bowl object has given way to a relief of Johann Sebastian Bach who died 250 years ago.

If we take a look at the work of the artists who have come onto the scene since 1982, it becomes clear that the changes evident in the work of the artists mentioned above are also changes that correspond to contemporary trends. Nature, landscapes and the seasons are themes that appear in the work of many of today's artists. Thus the title of Jenny Beaven's blue block is "Dead Sea". Marianne Franken's bowl with streaks of colour calls to mind a beach with sand and running water, and Vera Vehring's painted pebbles are entitled "Garden pictures". Impressions of nature are the basis of the work

by Wayne Higby and Leslie Manning. Gerald Weigel calls his object "Stone". Agathe Larpent-Ruffe's chunk of porcelain also evokes the memory of a stone, and Louis Combres calls his sphere "Coloured Planet". Antje Brüggemann-Breckwoldt, Ann Roberts, Suck-Woo Park and the Stephensons all present their own interpretations for the seasons, and Arnold Annen's "Archaeodicyomitra," Peter Fraser Beard's "Shell Form" and Marc Leuthold's "Purple Wheel" are all evocative of forms relating to natural history.

Space is the theme of the work by Tjok Dessauvage, Lilo Schrammel's spiral, Nina Hole's jagged "Either Way", Michael Moore's "Cluster Form", Jon Middlemiss' two wavy flame-like forms with trompe-l'oeil patterns, François Rüegg's convex white and complementary concave black elements, and Kyra Spieker's sawn brick cubes composed of two prisms placed one upon the other. Johannes Gebhard's cube consists of eight bricks and Christa Gebhardt's black boats are really meditation objects.

As far as the contributions from Europe are concerned, they corroborate Hans Ulrich Roller's postulate (page 11 of this publication): Northern and Western Europe are primarily represented by vessels and forms based on a compilation of vessels (Hans Munk Andersen, Mieke Evraert, Dorothy Feibleman, Cathy Fleckstein, Bente Hansen, Karl-Friedrich Korden, Beate Kuhn, Bodil Manz, Vincent Potier, Leen Quist, David Roberts, Elisabeth Schaffer, Karl and Ursula Scheid, Johan van Loon, Fritz Vehring and Gotlind Weigel); contributions from the Mediterranean consist mainly of plastic works that emphasise the texture of raw, untreated material (Isabel Barbaformosa, Marisa Herron, Madola, Mercedes Sebastian from Spain, Maria Voyatzoglu from Greece, the Argentinian-Italian Carlos Carle with his building rubble object, and the Italian Giancarlo Scapin with his rectangular stone with wavy patterns), and works with painted surfaces (Beril Anilamert and Bingül Basarir from Turkey, Khaled Ben Slimane from Tunisia and – he, too may be counted among this group – Mahmud Baghaeian from Iran). In Eastern European we find a predominance of human images and narrative elements. This is impressively illustrated by work from the former GDR, from Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia and Estonia such as Gertraud Möhwald's head encrusted with fragments of glazed china. Maria Theresa Kuczynska's glazed stoneware torso, and works by Anna Malicka-Zamorska, Jindra Vikova, Thomas Proll, Maria Geszler, Laszlo Fekete, Marta Nagy, as well as Annika Teder's "Dream" and Sandor Kecskemeti's "Step". Many of the Eastern European works have the character of assemblages, for example the silhouette-like vessel still life by Antje Scharfe, Renée Reichenbach's

fish (it is not a hand!), and above all "The tower" by Peteris Martinsons and "Teapot" by Juris Bergins.

The fabric textures by Elina Brandt-Hansen and Jo Anne Caron are more at home in Northern and Western Europe, where the figurative element is also evident. In addition to the work of Carmen Dionyse, examples of this are provided by Marmix Hoys, Gundi Dietz and Dalit Tayar. Michael Kuipers' "Keeper of Arcadia", a blue falcon with a vividly modelled body keeping watch from a high turned plinth, is in a category of its own: combining the techniques of modelling, turning, glazing and painting, it is an "in-image" that proclaims and preserves the classical disciplines of ceramics.

The still, immobile vessels by Steven Heinemann, Dennis Parks and Gustavo Perez appear to have been inspired by the old American past. The popularity of trompe-l'oeils and still lifes that prevails in America is expressed in the works of Sylvia Hyman and Ann Mortimer. Computer design is represented in the work of Wolfgang Vegas. Whereas Norma Rodney Harrack's glazed "Flask" is executed in plain colour, we find decorated vessels by Rimas Vis Girda, as well as in contributions from Australia and New Zealand in work by Greg Daly and Royce McGlashen; an example of plastic work from Australia is Alan Watt's "Leaning piece".

An individual and elemental African note is struck by Lawson Oyekan's "Trial with light. Mani and man".

Work by the Japanese artists who are new to the exhibition since 1982 confirms the tendencies mentioned above: Joh Akiyama's fallen and supported pyramid is reminiscent of a damaged artefact that has once more become part of nature; Masahiro Kiyomizu's exhibit is a space study of a perforated double pyramid; Hideo Matsumoto's contribution is a fantastic subterranean form; and Yasokichi Tokuda presents his vision of a landscape. Masters who have led the art of ceramic vessels onto a high level are Fumio Shimada, Toshio Ohi and the Chinese artist Xilin Qin, and light-hearted Japanese customs are the theme of Nobuko Tsutsumi's "Dragon Banza I".

Many of these artists have represented their country at major national and international exhibitions. Work by some of them has also been honoured in representative solo exhibitions and monographs. More information about some of them may be found in catalogues and publications such as:

Europäische Keramik der Gegenwart, Frechen 1986
Bewegung – europäische Keramik, Frechen 1996
Deutsche keramische Kunst der Gegenwart, Frechen 1991
Europäisches Kunsthandwerk, Stuttgart 1991
Europäische Keramik aus 13 Ländern, Osnabrück 1998

Triennale de la Porcelaine, Nyon 1989, 1992, 1998
Monographs of some of the Japanese artists represented here are published in: "Toh. The best selections of contemporary ceramics in Japan".

An overview of the American ceramists is provided by Garth Clark's and Margie Hughto's work: "A Century of Ceramics in the United States 1878–1978", New York 1979.

The books mentioned and these following monographs contain biographical details of the following artists:

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Andersen, Hans-Munk: Frechen 1996; Hans Munk Andersen-Gerd Hiort Petersen, Rønne 1999.
Annen, Arnold: Frechen 1996; Nyon 1992, 1995; Ausstellungskatalog Gallery Kashara, Osaka 1996.
Basarir, Bingül: Frechen 1996.
Beaven, Jenny: Frechen 1996.
Ben Slimane, Khaled: Khaled Ben Slimane, Maison des arts Tunis, Centre international de Hammamet 1986.
Bofill, Maria: Nyon 1989; The present of spanish ceramics, Richard Demarco Gallery Edinburgh 1989
Brandt-Hansen, Elina: Frechen 1996.
Brüggemann, Antje: Frechen 1986, 1991, 1996.
Carle, Carlos: Carlos Carle, ed. Artes, Milano 1992.
Caron, Jo Anne: Frechen 1996
Colmeiro, Elena: The present of spanish ceramics, Richard Demarco, Gallery Edinburgh 1989.
Daly, Greg: 1st International Ceramic Symposium in Australia 1988.
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Feibleman, Dorothy: Nyon 1998.
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Fleckstein, Cathy: Frechen 1986, Stuttgart 1991.
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Fukami, Sueharu: Toh, vol. 27, Kyoto 1993; Nyon 1989.
Gebhardt, Johannes: Frechen 1986, 1991.
Gebhardt, Christa: Frechen 1986, 1991.
Geszler, Maria: Nyon 1989.
Hansen, Bente: Stuttgart 1991, Bente Hansen, Galleri Norby, Kopenhagen 1998.
Hayashi, Yasuo: Yasuo Hayashi, Ausstellungskatalog Galerie Maya Behn, Zürich 1986; The works of Yasuo Hayashi, Kyoto 1998.
Highby, Wayne: Nyon 1998; Garth Clark 1978, S. 298.
Hoshino, Satoru: Toh, vol. 4; Kyoto 1992; Hoshino Satoru 1995–1999, Kitahama 1999.

- Ito, Keiji: Toh, vol. 27, Kyoto 1992.
- Kecskemeti, Sandor: Nyon 1989; Sandor Kecskemeti, Gundremmingen 1997.
- Kiyomizu, Masahiro: Toh, vol. 46, Kyoto 1993.
- Korden, Karl-Friedrich: Frechen 1991.
- Kuczynska, Maria Theresa: Nyon 1989; Frechen 1986, 1996.
- Kuhn, Beate: Frechen 1986, 1996; Nyon 1992.
- Kuipers, Michael: Frechen 1996.
- Larpent-Ruffe, Agathe: Nyon 1995.
- Madola: Frechen 1996.
- Manz, Bodil: Frechen 1996; Nyon 1992, 1998.
- Martinsons, Peteris: Frechen 1986, 1996.
- Matsumoto, Hideo: Toh, vol. 35, Kyoto 1993.
- Mestre, Enrique: Frechen 1986; Stuttgart 1991; Osnabrück 1998; The present of spanish ceramics, Richard Demarco Gallery Edinburgh 1989; Enrique Mestre, Construir formes – Fingir espais / Construir formas – Fingir espacios, Valencia 1999.
- Miyashita, Zendji: Toh, vol. 37, Kyoto 1993.
- Möhwald, Gertraud: Frechen 1996; Max Läuger-Preis, Lörrach 1992 (wo das im Katalog abgebildete Werk unter dem Titel «Bildnis RM II 1991» ausgestellt war); Gertraud Möhwald, Keramik, Halle 1989.
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- Park, Suck-Woo: Frechen 1996
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- Petersen, Gerd Hiort: Osnabrück 1998; Gerd Hiort Petersen – Hans Munk Andersen, Rønne 1999.
- Quist, Leen; Frechen 1996.
- Reichenbach, Renée: Frechen 1996.
- Roberts, Ann: Ausstellungskatalog «The Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery» 1992.
- Rüegg, François: Frechen 1996; Nyon 1992.
- Schaffer, Elisabeth: Frechen 1991; Nyon 1992.
- Scharfe, Antje: Frechen 1996.
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- Stephenson, John: Ceramics in the United States, 1979, S. 332.
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- Van Loon, Johan: Frechen 1986; Osnabrück 1998.
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- Voyatzoglu, Maria: Frechen 1986.
- Watt, Alan: Nyon 1989.
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