



Symposium: 16 July- 14 August | Secondary School of Arts and Crafts in Bechyně

Opening of the exhibition: 14 August | Aleš South Bohemian Gallery – International Museum of Ceramics, Bechyně

Exhibition of works: 15 August 2021 - 10 January 2022 | Aleš South Bohemian Gallery – International Museum of Ceramics, Bechyně

Curator of the Symposium: Kristýna Péčová

Press release from 23 June 2021

29th International Symposium of Ceramics in Bechyně

Six artists will create their work outside the circle

Six artists invited to work together as part of the 29th International Symposium of Ceramics in Bechyně will venture outside the circle. Each of the invited artists typifies a different way of working with ceramic clay. This year, one of the oldest symposiums in the world aims to explore media overlaps in the field while maintaining respect for the nature and specificity of the material. The month-long symposium will begin on 16 July and will culminate in the opening of an exhibition on 14 August at 4 p.m. in the Aleš South Bohemian Gallery – the International Museum of Ceramics. The exhibition will present works created during the symposium and will be open to the public from 15 August 2021 to 10 January 2022. For more information visit www.symposium-bechyne.com.

This year, the curator of the ceramics symposium, Kristýna Péčová, approached six artists who use clay as one of the materials in their work. Part of their long-term work with ceramics involves the crossing of traditional boundaries of art disciplines and the use of ceramics as a material for creating contemporary art. *"I am delighted that such an international group of prominent and important contemporary artists with a close relationship to ceramics has accepted our invitation. I look forward to seeing what will emerge from their month-long work in one place,"* says curator Kristýna Péčová.

SALVATORE ARANCIO / *1974/

The focus of interest in Salvatore Arancio's artistic practice is the potential of images, particularly how images and their meanings can be framed and viewed. In his work, natural and artificial, mineral and vegetable, scientific and mythological aspects meet. Through the use of a range of media, such as ceramics, etching, collage, animation and video, Arancio creates new juxtapositions that are both beautifully evocative and deeply disquieting. Thus, a sort of atlas of confusion emerges.

Four years ago, he presented his work at the at the 57th Venice Biennale: an outdoor ceramic sculptural installation. It represented a mystical garden in which visitors were confronted with mysterious, totemic formations inspired by petrified trees created in Hawaii when lava poured into the forests there.

NAO MATSUNAGA / *1980 /

London has been the home of Japanese sculptor Nao Matsunaga for many years. The process of his creation is built around a series of actions and reactions that occur during production. He compares his creative practice to a dance: the long, slow, but sometimes also rapid interactions of his body and the material influence the final work.

Matsunaga is fascinated by the human ability to perceive everything around us through symbols and visual signs, whether a smiley face created from a colon and a parenthesis or an image of an animal seen in the clouds. This is what he uses in his own work, when he wants to awaken different emotions and memories in the viewer through his abstract objects, which are full of marks, colours, lines and different textures.

MARCO CHIANDETTI / *1973 /

The artist Marco Chiandetti will come to the Bechyně symposium from Cape Town, where he has been doing his creative work for a long time. His work does not fit into traditional boxes and he approaches it through experimentation with materials and craft processes. Clay is a key material in his creative process even though the final work is often eventually made from something else. It is thus influenced by the process of creation and also has a specific socio-political overlap. What is visible on the surface of his works is contrasted with hidden layers of meaning that are usually more disturbing and dangerous.

For example, in one of his famous projects, *Bullet Holes - A Measure of Kinetic Energy (AK47)*, he shot at blocks of clay with a Kalashnikov, thus creating visually appealing objects that were also a critical response to the widespread gun culture in South Africa.

IVANA KRÁLÍKOVÁ / *1982 /

Ivana Králíková's area of interest has long been at the intersection of visual art, ceramics in a broader sense and speculative design with a focus on environmental topics. Her artistic work and research deal with various aspects of human interaction with the earth, in both local and global contexts. She studied at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (2008) and also at the University of Crafts, Arts and Design in Stockholm (2010).

Since 2017, she has been engaged in a piece of long-term interdisciplinary research, *Dig Where You Stand*, using land as a gateway to enter the world of exploring the natural and cultural processes that influence land use in cities. In a component of the project, *Hi Neighbour!* (2018-present), she explores the functionality of the land in the local environment of the

Stockholm periphery of Hjulsta from several perspectives. It gives an insight into the local community's connection to the land and how materials circulate in an urban landscape that is encroached upon by humans. In this project, she applies various art interventions, combined with scientific methods to highlight urgent ecological issues.

JIMENA MENDOZA / *1979 /

The work of Mexican artist Jimena Mendoza, who currently teaches at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, has been decisively influenced by living in different social contexts, observing and thinking about cultural modes of life. She is interested in objects, their context, and the story behind them that is inseparable from their contact with humans. She explores their use and misuse, their placement, and the very way in which they were processed. In her object-oriented work she combines references to iconography, literature, mythology, vision and ideas about the universe; drawing, ceramics, printing and casting become their vehicles.

BARBORA DAYEF / *1991 /

A recent graduate of the sculpture studio at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague, Barbora Dayef deals with the intermediate space between sculpture and performance, and working with a concrete material is a separate and essential subject for her. She has long worked with the forms and symbolism of ancient cultures, whose references are often enhanced by the use of clay, which also evokes clear historical and semantic connotations. In her performative works, clay appears mainly in its raw, unfired state, serving at times as a blanket for the performer, and at other times as a means of creating an ancient column with hand-carved fluting.

16 July – 14 August 2021

International Symposium of Ceramics in Bechyně 1966-2021 | Outside the Circle

Location: Secondary School of Arts and Crafts in Bechyně, Aleš South Bohemian Gallery – International Museum of Ceramics, Bechyně

Curator of the Symposium: Kristýna Pěčová

Launch of the Symposium: 16 July 2021 at 6 p.m.

Open Door Evening: 31 July 2021

Opening of the exhibition: 14 July 2021 at 4 p.m.

Exhibition of works created during the symposium: 15 August 2021 - 10 January 2022

A co-organiser of the International Symposium of Ceramics in Bechyně is the Aleš South Bohemian Gallery. The event is supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, the State Culture Fund, the South Bohemian Region, the Aleš South Bohemian Gallery, the Ladislav Sutnar Faculty of Design and Art of the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen, the town of Bechyně, the Secondary School of Arts and Crafts in Bechyně, the LAUFEN CZ, s.r.o. company, the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague and the Italian Cultural Institute.

Media partners of the International Symposium of Ceramics in Bechyně are Czech Radio - České Budějovice studio, Artalk, Flash Art, Artyčok.tv, Czechdesign, the Cultural Centre of the City of Bechyně.

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