

Press release

ceramicarpet

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Aline Bouvy
Wang Du
Mekhitar Garabedian
Larissa Lockshin
Zoë Paul
Tessa Perutz
Ry Rocklen

33 rue de la Concorde

29.04 - 5.06.2021

Opening

Thursday 29.04.2021
from 6 - 9 pm

This evocatively titled exhibition features a selection of seven artists from the Baronian Xippas gallery. Although all have different nationalities, we have chosen to bring them together because of their common desire - processing material through craftsmanship. Looking at their combined works, two media immediately jump out - ceramics and tapestry. The presentation of these works in a group exhibit gave rise to the neologism *ceramicarpet*.

Although both techniques have developed from crafting methods, their characteristics could not be more different - the smooth, shiny surface of the ceramic glaze stands in sharp contrast to the soft, woolly feel of the tapestry. This results in a dialogue of both opposition and complementarity between the works.

Whereas tapestry and ceramics have long since been confined to the domestic field and the decorative arts, they have detached themselves from this bias bit by bit, thanks to a number of contemporary artists who have continuously renewed their weaving and earthenware techniques.

On the one hand, the latest tapestries still have a certain ambivalence, holding the middle ground between image and sculpture, between scopophilia (the pleasure of possessing someone by looking at them) and tactile pleasure, but also between antique and contemporary art. On the other hand, the renewed popularity of ceramics is also linked to the unpredictable and inimitable aspects of the material as well as the surprises that emerge due to the technique used. Ceramics should have a lively appearance, a presence that marble or bronze, for example, do not have.

The artists featured here do not only work with these two techniques - most of them embarked on this type of work in addition to their usual practice. The works displayed as part of *ceramicarpet* express a return to living things and to manual work as well as an urgent need for modesty and unpretentiousness.

The works by Ry Rocklen (US) represent familiar objects, highlighting the mundane activities of daily life. His technique creates a paradoxical relationship between these everyday objects and the precious appearance he gives them. An inflatable beach ball, a TV and a slice of pizza become precious sculptures and values. Through the medium of ceramics, everyday objects gain a sense of dignity that renders them timeless.

Canadian-born Larissa Lockshin has a hand in each one of her works. She intentionally chooses materials that try and break out of their confines. Questioning the existing associations, classifications, definitions and jargon around art and painting, Lockshin highlights the object rather than the content of the image. By representing animals in nature or everyday objects such as bowling pins on her ceramics, she plunges us into a state of nonchalance, offering us a new and contemporary reading of the medium.

English artist Zoë Paul uses various techniques and timeless materials such as ceramics, bronze, textile and drawings. Her works question our relationship with tradition and craftsmanship as well as with our notions of community and the domestic space in this digital era. Her series of ceramic vases *Hospitalfield Pot* reminds us of an imbalanced collection of human body parts. They were created by stretching pieces of clay until they shattered and crumbled and then transforming these sagging shapes into human bodies. According to Paul, working with clay is like making a three-dimensional drawing, allowing us to comprehend space through our bodies.

Luxembourg native Aline Bouvy's aesthetic explorations use a variety of techniques including ceramics, based in the main on the same theme: the issue of taboos, principally in relation to the body. Her work is based on freedom and defiance of etiquette. It is not so much aimed at provocation, however, but rather the living and transgressive demonstration of desire. In the guise of kitsch and incongruity, Aline Bouvy's work shows a range of more or less obscene figures, boldly taking us from desire to repulsion.

The draped fabric embroidered with ceramic pearls is the perfect embodiment of the universe of American artist Tessa Perutz. Her works function as psychological landscapes and bear witness to a spontaneous exploration punctuated with anecdotes, hurried notes and existential reflections. Tessa Perutz' work is shaped by conceptualisation and intuitive processes, organically intertwined and mutually informative. For *ceramicarpet*, Tessa Perutz experiments with the ceramic craft she has appropriated and made her own, using an assembly of pearls to create a landscape in relief.

Armenian-born Mekhitar Garabedian's work is structured around themes like memory, identity and history, which are regarded as unsolvable dilemmas. Using a variety of media, including tapestry, a lot of his works have been inspired by his experience as an immigrant and play on the humour and poetic qualities he finds between languages, cultures and histories. They are often based on texts and examine the way in which language and linguistic structures shape our individual position in the world. Going back and forth between Armenian, Arabic, Dutch, French and English, Garabedian shows us how language plays a key role in constructing our identity. This tapestry was made in the same spirit and has been embroidered with the letters of the Armenian alphabet.

Chinese artist Wang Du deals with the incessant flow of information with which the media inundates us on a daily basis. According to him, this leads us to a state of 'post-reality', where the lines between the real world and the world created by the media are blurred. His work is not only inspired by images from the Western (mainly French and American) press or social media, they are also the main media used in his creations. This tapestry is a three-dimensional reproduction of a subscription slip taken directly from a psychology journal.

The works of these artists are based in the main on themes such as psychology, memory and everyday life. In *ceramicarpet*, objects take precedence over images - the medium used (ceramics or tapestry) is often out of sync with what it represents. By re-appropriating these media, the artists create a new, unique language, combining traditional crafting techniques and artistic innovations.