



MUSÉE BARBIER-MUELLER
GENÈVE

GROUND FLOOR

Subtle distinctions and connections

The Musée Barbier-Mueller and Jacques Kaufmann, ceramic artist

An exhibition

This project is built around comparisons between select pieces from the Barbier-Mueller collections and works that Jacques Kaufmann has produced in his studio and around the world, over a long stretch of time, the aim being to identify similarities – as well as differences – between them.

The exhibition juxtaposes works of different origins, time periods and materials, suggesting resonances but also inviting viewers to create their own connections. Ultimately, it is the viewer who “makes the picture”.

In which it's firstly about memory

The molecular structure of clay, just like the practice of ceramics itself, is made up of layers: mineral memories on the one hand, historical and cultural ones on the other.



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Then transformation

Linked to a “phenomenology of transformation”, Jacques Kaufmann’s approach to and understanding of the ceramic phenomenon involves an interrogation of its materials and processes, encompassing forms of hybridity that are as much material and technical as they are cultural, in a constant exploration of the medium’s potential. Materials, processes or tools and spaces constitute three axes whose interrelationship makes it possible to imagine and generate an infinite number of different solutions.

Encounter

A sanctuary of ritual or everyday objects, each one more remarkable than the last, the Musée Barbier-Mueller houses a collection that is recognized internationally as a leading centre for the so-called “primitive” – or “distant” – arts, depending on the terminology in use at different times.

Ceramics, which comes under the umbrella of contemporary art and its contextual practices, also looks for encounters with whatever produces continuities and disjunctions within human expression, across time and space. In the field of the arts, the past does not really pass. Forms are reactivated, re-emerge, reappropriate one other, come together again.

The disparities, connections, conjunctions, analogies, intervals between works allow us to perceive those things that might contribute to bringing about our long-term collective effort as



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humans to meet our fundamental spiritual needs. The endurance and movement of forms contradict the notion of progress in art.

Jacques Kaufmann

This exhibition features in the program of the 50th Congress of the International Academy of Ceramics (IAC), organized by *swissceramics*, which will be held at the Geneva International Congress Centre from 12th to 16th September 2022 on the theme “*Melting Pot. From the Alchemical Crucible to the Cultural Crucible*”. This event is accompanied by 35 major exhibitions organized by partner museums and galleries in Romandie.