

Malene Müllertz



Keepsake



Malene Müllertz
Keepsake
13.04 - 18.05. 2024
DAVIS GALLERY
Contemporary Art
Bredgade 69
DK-1260 Copenhagen K
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"KEEPSAKE" (recollection/memory)

Retrospective exhibition by MALENE MÜLLERTZ
Davis Gallery 2024

Malene Müllertz belongs to the nationally and internationally recognized elite of Danish ceramicists who emerged in the last decades of the 20th century. Her talent was noticed from her earliest works after graduating as a ceramicist from the Danish School of Arts and Crafts in 1970. Today, almost 54 years later, it is clear that the young ceramicist was not just a talent, but an artistically gifted and original creator. She was inspired to pursue an artistic career through her upbringing in the vibrant cultural environment surrounding the prolific Methling family, which for several generations had great significance in Danish theater, film and literature. She was born into this family, which also included a beloved grandmother with Chinese ancestry.

Malene Müllertz has, like few others, taken care of her trusted talents and created a ceramic oeuvre with an artistic wingspan and a craftsmanship and technical mastery that delights and moves the viewer. It is fortunate for ceramic art that Malene Müllertz chose ceramic as her preferred material and means of expression. With the same mastery, her talent could have developed into drawing and painting, sculpture, textile art or design. It is the overall sensitivity to form, color, proportion and materials that drives the idea and execution of her works and the convincing artistic level. Müllertz herself cites inspiration from Japanese and Korean art, Bauhaus and Cubism, as well as impressions from her many travels, which are captured in sketches and drawings of places, landscapes, crafts and architecture. Several are included in her exhibition catalogs, where the fine line can also be seen in sketches and working drawings for ceramic works.

With the retrospective exhibition at Davis Gallery in spring 2024, there is now a unique opportunity to see and revisit a distinguished selection of 50 works from different periods of her long ceramic career. The selection includes examples of many of the recurring tool types that Malene Müllertz has developed in her experimental practice and taken forward in her work. The basic form is often the container, turned, modeled or made in plate technique and then worked with the full range of techniques that she has mastered and that best fulfill the intentions of the work. The difficulty of the works is legendary and, in addition to sublime craftsmanship and artistic nerve, requires a high work ethic, immersion and endless patience.

In the words of the master himself: "My biggest inspiration is the material and especially the processes, which I think provide guidelines for the final expression, such as what the clay can technically bear? Nature is also a big inspiration for me, patterns and growth. And the feeling of

"conforming" to some rules that are bigger than what we can see and understand, almost a kind of religious backdrop that arises with the meditative state you get while working."

Malene Müllertz's workshop has produced a large number of works that can be thematically described but not chronologically delimited, ceramic forms are resumed and the same applies to the wide variety of geometric patterns. As can be seen in the exhibition, she has mastered the entire scale from small, exquisite boxes to monumental vessels and bowls; among the latter are two large, masterfully and tightly modeled vessels with zircon glaze and a third, similarly modeled, beautiful work with a half tab, which has the exhibition title "Keepsake" (remembrance, memory).

The small boxes can almost be called signature works for this ceramicist, creating a wonderfully captivating and imaginative world of colors and shapes, often made in porcelain and cast from Müllertz's original models.

The exhibition also includes examples of the extremely refined, striped dishes and bowls with upright edges and geometric ornamentation made in various techniques that require an unfathomable mathematical precision.

In the 1990s, Müllertz developed a new group of works inspired by basketry from cultures around the world and Moorish architecture. These works are based on carvings in a classic cylindrical form of patterns and structures that open up light/shadow effects and associate with wicker/net. The openwork pieces come in numerous variations, some built up from glazed or unglazed clay threads and others with organically inspired patterns cut through the cylinder. A highlight within this group are the works known as ruses, incredibly complicated illusion art. Also worth mentioning here is the type of work that was the starting point for the "Tiara" exhibition at the Davis Gallery 2022, where the openwork cylinders are finished with a tiara-like superstructure made of porcelain.

From recent years also comes a delightful type of work called "paraphrases" over jugs, bright, colorful and cheerful works made in turning and plating technique with differently shaped and colored elements that are stacked unpretentiously on top of each other, seemingly at random, but make no mistake, randomness does not take place in our exhibitor's workshop. With the jugs, Malene Müllertz sends a loving greeting to her "grandma" with Chinese ancestry.

These few touches in Malene Müllertz's rich and diverse oeuvre are a tribute and declaration of love to a great ceramist of the first class, who for half a century has enriched the world with outstanding art and thus continued one of humanity's oldest and most noble crafts.

Bodil Busk Laursen
April 2024

The quote by Malene Müllertz is from the exhibition catalog for Keramiske Veje 2018, p. 45.



Malene Müllertz, "Red Ruse" 2023
Stoneware, 39x32x25 cm



Malene Müllertz, " Black striped oval dish" 1999
Stoneware, 14x42x23 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Daisy Tiara" 2021
Stoneware, 22,5x12x12 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Small coral mesh" 2021
Stoneware, 18x14x14 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Double bowl with spiral" 2002
Stoneware 16x27x20 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Keepsake" oval shaped bowl 2005
Stoneware 12x28x17 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Grey pitcher with white spot" 2021
Stoneware 31x15x9 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Yellow pitcher with tounure" 2021
Stoneware 22x10x6 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Intarsia Basket dark" 2010
Stoneware 21x21x21 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Black stitched ruse"
Stonewarej 34x22x16 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Andalusian lace net" 2011
Stoneware 18x22x22 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Net with orange border" 2008
Stoneware 22x28x26 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Blue pitcher with yellow spout" 2021
Stoneware 12x24x 8 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Pitcher with yellow ear" 2021
Stoneware 24x20x10 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Root net small red" 2004
Stoneware 11x14x14 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Root net black with red enamel" 2008
Stentøj 18x19x17 cm



Malene Müllertz, "Zen, oval double basket" 2015
Stoneware 22x30x21 cm



CV * 1949

Education:

1975 - own studio

1977 og 82 Employed as an artist at the Royal Danish Porcelain Factory

1973-76 The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts School of Architecture, dept. for Industrial Design

1970-73 Employed as an artist at Bing & Grøndahl's Porcelain factory

1965-70 Royal Danish Academy – Design

1965-66 Ceramic workshop internship

Represented at:

Design Museum, Copenhagen DK

The Danish Arts Foundation, Copenhagen DK

Museum Het Prinsessehof, Leeuwarden

Nationalmuseum, Stockholm SE

Sammlung Thiermann, Hamburg

Palmer Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State University, USA

Victoria and Albert Museum, London UK

Trapholt Museum, Kolding DK

Schleswig-Holsteinisches Landesmuseum, Schloss Gottorp DE

Kulturministeriet, København

Ny Carlsbergfonden, København

Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam

Ellen og Knud Dalhoff Larsens Fond, København

Keramikmuseet Grimmerhus, Middelfart

Næstved Museum

Keramion, Frechen, Köln

Nordenfjeldske Kunstmuseum, Norge

Carlsberg Akademi, København

Augustinus Fonden, København

Birmingham Museum of Art, Alabama USA

Selected soloexhibitions:

Davis Gallery, København, Keepsake 2024

Davis Gallery, København, Tiara 2022

Ann Linnemann Galleri, København 2019 og 2020

“KAOLIN” Stockholm 2013

Ann Linneman Studiogalleri, “FRAGILE” 2012

Galleri Nørby, København, 2007

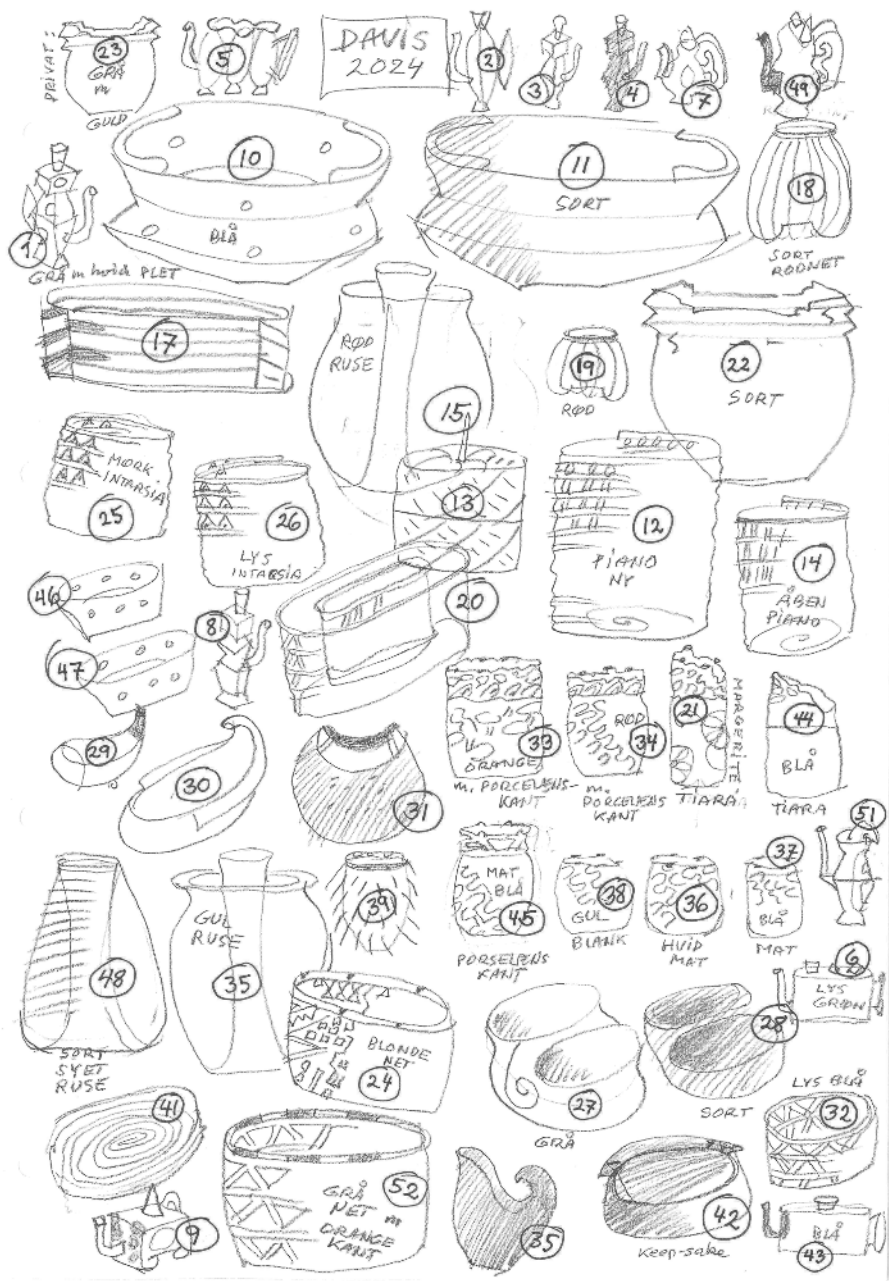
Kunstindustrimuseet, København, ‘Nye keramiske arbejder’2007

‘Puls contemporary ceramics’, Bruxelles, 2003

Galleri Nørby, 'Netværk', 2002
Galleri Nørby, 'Nye keramiske arbejder', 2000
Galleri Björnen, Stockholm, 1999
Galleri Granberger, Sverige, 1998
Munkeruphus (sammen med Peder Musse) 1998
Næstved Museum, Boderne, 'Najade drømme', 1997
Kunstindustrimuseet, 'Nye keramiske æsker', 1997
Keramikmuseet Grimmerhus, Middelfart, 1995

Selected group exhibitions:

Clay Museum, Middelfart, Keramiske Veje 2023
Hjorth Museum, Rønne DK 2023
Clay Museum, Middelfart, Keramiske Veje 2018
Sophienholm Keramiske Veje 2015
Kunstforeningen af 14. august, Kunstindustrimuseet, 2005
'Dansk keramik', De tiendschuur Tegelen Museum, Holland, 2005
Den danske Ambassade, Berlin, 2004
Höganäs Museum og Kunsthal 2013
Johannes Larsen Museet 2013
SOFA ART FAIR, New York 2008 – 09 – 10 og 2011
'Colletc Art Fair', Victoria and Albert Museum, London, 2004, 05, 06 og 07
Galleri Carlin og Det danske Hus, Paris, 2004
'From the Kilns of Denmark', vandredstilling i USA, bl.a. American Craft Museum, N.Y., 2002
'Flet', Nordjyllands Kunstmuseum, 2001
'Euro Art/Clay', Galleri Yofuko, Tokyo, 2001
'Dansk keramik', Sigtuna Museum, Stockholm, 2001
'Dansk keramik', Haderslev Museum, 1998
'Dansk keramik 1850-1997' Sophienholm, Lyngby, 1997
'Danish Pots and their Influence', Galerie Besson, London, 1995
'Danish Ceramics', Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 1995
'From the Golden Age to the Present Day', City Art Centre, Edinburgh, 1995
Galleri Lejonet, Stockholm, 1995
'Den Danske Keramiktriennale', Kunstmuseet Trapholt, Kolding, 1994
Bornholms Museum, Gudhjem, 1994
'Keramik Europas', Museum Het Prinsessehof, Leeuwarden, 1994
'Keramik Europas', Keramikmuseum Westerwald, Höhr-Grenzhausen, Tyskland, 1993
Kunstindustrimuseet, Helsinki, 'Art and Industry in Ceramics', 1992
Viborg Kunstmuseum (sammen med Vibeke Klint), 1990
Den Frie, Keramiske Veje, København, 1985, 87, 89, 92, 94, 97, 00 og 04



Colophon

Keepsake

Davis Gallery

13.04 – 18.05. 2024

Soloexhibition by Malene Müllertz

Foreword: Bodil Busk Laursen

Photos: Ole Akhøj and artist archive

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