

Your Royal Highness, artists, national commissioners, co-organizers and everyone who has traveled to Bornholm, it is a great honor and pleasure to welcome you to European Ceramic Context 2010.

With two large exhibitions, a student workshop, a conference and an Artist in Residence program, this symposium will discuss and present contemporary European ceramics of today. This biennial event is motivated by a desire to promote the disciplines of ceramic and glass art at European and global level.

In these exhibitions we will see works of 110 artists from 30 European countries. The exhibitions are divided into two categories, the category for European Ceramic Art at Bornholm Art Museum and the category for New Talent will open at different venue, Grønbechs Gård, later on today.

We have chosen to curate the exhibitions through cooperation with national commissioners from the 30 participating European countries. This ensures the diversity and a full overview of the European ceramic scene. The national commissioners have been chosen for their insight and knowledge about the ceramic scene in their country. They have nominated ceramic artists from their relevant country and a selection committee then made the final selection.

Clay... this natural material - can be transformed it seems, in endless variations. Sometimes heavy, solid, huge – at other times fragile as thin as paper and almost transparent. It takes skilled craftsmanship, aesthetic attention to the form and surface - and artistic reflection to become a good ceramicist.

In these two exhibitions we will see such skilled work in all its variety, from traditional pottery to installations and sculpture, from narrative figures to functional form. We are exposed to a wealth of trends and developments, where ceramic artists are pushing the boundaries for their common material – clay.

At the upcoming conference and student workshop, that is also a part of European Ceramic Context, the focal point is to address and investigate the situation of European ceramic art in post industrial industry and the position in which ceramic artists find themselves in our current cultural economy. For the first time we are introducing an Artist in Residence program. Our hope and goal is to establish a tradition of exchange and a meeting place for artists to develop ideas. As part of this program, we have 8 talented artists from all over the world working here for 6 weeks, incl. a well established artist from Tasmania.

I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to all the artists in the exhibitions, for sharing your great work with us and for traveling to Bornholm to celebrate this event. And thank you to the national commissioners for your knowledge, cooperation and patience. We have been in intense communication for the past months – I now look forward to meeting you in person.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the members of the jury, who for the past two days, have gone through the exhibitions and selected the two prize winners, who will now be presented by Her Royal Highness The Crown Princess.