IN THE ROLLING

RAW INTERIORS & RUGGED MAKERS

IRIS DE FEIJTER AND IRENE SCHAMPAERT



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AS BRUTE AS IT GETS

TROPICAL, COLOURFUL AND ROUGH: THIS VILLA UNITES THE BEST OF BRAZILIAN MODERNISM.











Matthias Kaiser



This potter mixes the best of Eastern and Western influences.



Q A

INTRODUCE YOURSELF. WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU DO?

I have been working as a ceramist. After studying in New York, Vienna and Japan, I returned to my native region in Austria. A connecting thread in my work is imperfection. I don't do this on purpose, but every piece has some sort of imperfection. For example, it may not be entirely symmetrical or there may be a mistake in the glaze. I learned to appreciate this in Japan. Western culture is all about perfection and functionality. In Japan, they see it entirely differently and embrace imperfection.

Q

DO YOU FEEL LIKE A CRAFTSMAN, AN ARTIST OR A DESIGNER?

I am all three. As a designer, I think about function, colour and texture. As an artisan, I have the technical know-how and make all my pieces myself. And as an artist, I create unique pieces and there is always a concept behind the work. That is why I often refer to myself as a 'potter', which combines all three trades. I don't want to be pigeonholed. I want people to look at my work and form an opinion about it without labelling it.

Q

YOU MAKE YOUR OWN CLAY. ISN'T THAT A LOT OF WORK?

Strictly speaking you cannot create your own clay; nature has done that in the last million years. But I do dig my own clay. It's much easier to buy filtered, mixed and ready-to-use clay from the shop, but I prefer to use a good quality clay which I need to go

on long explorations to find. There are two places near my studio where I dig clay and there is also a place in the Czech Republic. I first need to wet and dry this raw material before working with it. It contains stones and sand, but that doesn't bother me; I like the fact that the material tells its own story.

Q

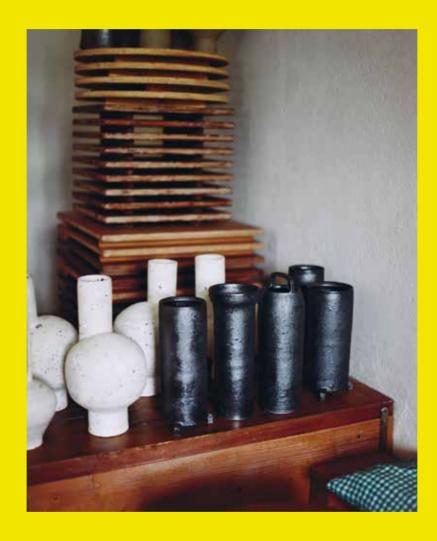
AND YOUR GLAZES?

Those I also make myself. In Japan, I learned a special technique which I have customised. I call this technique 'cracked slip'. Instead of creating the glaze with glass, I use strongly diluted porcelain. I apply a thick coat of this glaze to the pot and then bake it several times in succession so that the porcelain cracks. I fix the cracks by sanding and polishing them for hours, which is very labour-intensive work. Ironically, even though a cracked slip sculpture looks very raw and brutal, I actually sand it for much longer than a vase with a smooth glaze.

Q

WHERE DO YOU FIND YOUR INSPIRATION?

By travelling, living and working abroad, such as in America, India and Iran. I also studied in Japan for several years, which has strongly influenced my work. But no matter how much I admire Eastern ceramics, I will never copy it. I always make it my own.

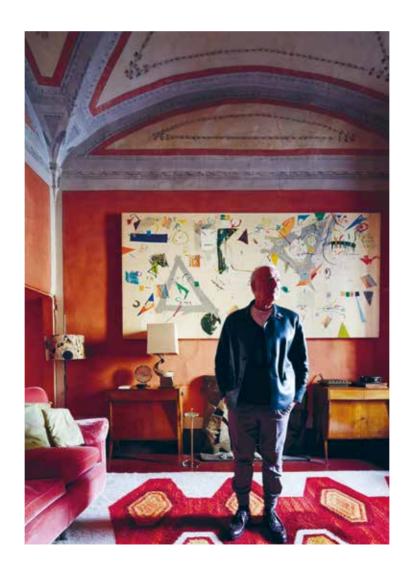






ROUGH LUXURY

THIS ONE OF A KIND ITALIAN PALAZZO SUMMARIZES THE PAST MILLENNIUM.





The chairs and chest of drawers in the entrance hall are from the 1950s, designed by the Italian Gio Ponti. A good friend painted the wall painting.





Some areas of the house have hidden doors that look like part of a built-in closet, even though they lead to a different room.







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© Lannoo Publishing, 2017 D/2017/45/43 – NUR 454 ISBN: 978 94 014 4149 0

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