

IN THE ROUGH

RAW INTERIORS & RUGGED MAKERS

IRIS DE FEIJTER AND IRENE SCHAMPAERT

8

PATINA PERFECT
Copenhagen, Denmark

18

AS BRUTE AS IT GETS
São Paulo, Brazil

30

Matthias Kaiser
Grafendorf bei Hartberg, Austria

38

EXTREME RECYCLING
Utrecht, the Netherlands

48

FROM SHED TO SHACK
Washington, United States

60

ROUGH LUXURY
Arezzo, Italy

72

David Umemoto
Montreal, Canada

80

DARK AND STORMY
Marrakesh, Morocco

90

THE BOLD AND THE COLOURFUL
Milan, Italy

100

ROUGH STUFF
Prague, Czech Republic

110

Kaspar Hamacher
Raeren, Belgium

116

50 SHADES OF GREY
Mexico-City, Mexico

128

THE NEW PRIMITIVES
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

144

CONCRETE JUNGLE
São Paulo, Brazil

154

Sandra Fuzier & Alexandre Piffaut
Saint-Julien-du-Verdon, France

162

ANOTHER STONE IN THE WALL
Morcote, Switzerland

174

ROCK STEADY
Linescio, Switzerland

184

ROUGH 'N ROLL
Amsterdam, the Netherlands

194

Santiago Palermo
Buenos Aires, Argentina

200

WILD AT HEART
Rotterdam, the Netherlands

212

ROCK SOLID
Sandefjord, Norway

220

Gabriel Craig & Amy Weiks
Detroit, United States

228

THE CAST AND THE CURIOUS
São Paulo, Brazil

239

Photo credits

SÃO PAULO | BRAZIL

AS BRUTE AS IT GETS

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









GRAFENDORF BEI HARTBERG | AUSTRIA

Matthias Kaiser



This potter mixes the best of Eastern and Western influences.



Q INTRODUCE YOURSELF. WHAT EXACTLY DO YOU DO?

A 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?

A 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?

A 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?

A 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?

A 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.







AREZZO | ITALY

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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