

Maarten Heijkamp

The Photographic Ceramic Relief

10 September till 22 October 2016

Opening Saturday 10 September 16 - 18 hrs

The gallery is closed during Amsterdam Drawing 22-25 September

Maarten Heijkamp's first exhibition at Galerie de Witte Voet aims to introduce the viewer to the intensive four-year long period of transitioning his work from photography into ceramics.

Since graduating from the Rietveld Academy in Amsterdam, Maarten Heijkamp has been creating monumental photographic works using self-built camera obscuras. In his workshop which has been converted into a camera obscura he makes staged compositions. To photograph objects on location, he converts available structures such as sheds or shipping containers into cameras. The method enables him to give the image a specific scale and to define the skin of the photograph. Sitting inside the camera he contemplates the projected image before fixing it onto paper. By exposing at night and in negative he forces himself to redefine the scene into a painterly concept.

Inspired by the ceramic surfaces of his father's work he decided to research parallels between ceramic glazes and the photographic emulsion. At the European Ceramic Work Centre, he developed a method to make photographic ceramic reliefs inside a camera obscura. That research was awarded with a prestigious prize at the Gyeonggi Biennale in South Korea.

At his studio he further evolves his newly acquired photographic ceramic vocabulary. Whereas the translation of the projection inside the camera onto wet clay started out by engraving by hand, he subsequently developed the Photographic Hammer; a device that engraves the projected image into clay using light sensors and pneumatic actuators. The first prototype of the Photographic Hammer was moved by hand over the ceramic surface in the darkness of the camera, a very slow and noisy process. The intensity of this method forced him to focus on every single indentation the hammer makes in the clay, ploughing the surface like a farmer ploughs the land, slowly becoming part of the machine.

Looking towards integrating the new works into architecture, for example as facades, he decided to scale up the method. His studio in Zaandam is converted into a large format camera in which the projection is translated into ceramics using a combination of high tech CNC and light sensors with traditional ceramics and optics. Now it's possible to create photographic ceramic reliefs up to 3x4 meter, but more importantly, the research of the past years has led him to the point where the ceramic works can use the specific scale and materiality that his photographic works on paper do.

The works on show in de Witte Voet tell a story of trial and error, perseverance, but most of all a deep fascination for the representation of one material by the other.

www.maartenheijkamp.nl
www.galeriedewittevoet.nl

Made possible by the generous support of Creative Industries Fund NL and Stokroos Foundation

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