



MAISON LOUIS CARRÉ



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Odd and Even *A Collection*

Odd and Even – A Collection

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Foreword

The exhibition *Odd and Even – a Collection* at Maison Louis Carré has provided us with an extraordinary opportunity to enter and immerse ourselves in the artwork of this unique house, designed by Finnish architect and designer Alvar Aalto. Everything we see and touch here seems to sing with one voice; this harmony even extends to the building's function in a way that promotes its integrity and legitimacy. From the wave-like entrance hall with its curved wooden ceiling and the gentle inflection of the sitting room furniture, to the brilliant rays of light streaming in through windows and those extraordinary light fixtures, everything appears to hum to the same tune. It all seems connected or stemming from a central architectural core, as Aalto himself suggested, with its theme branching out in forms throughout the space.

But how do we, as imperfect humans with our own idiosyncratic styles, fit into such a beautifully designed space? Must we impose our individual personalities, or is there a way to find harmony where there are opposing tastes? These reflections formed the genesis of this exhibition, which sees 16 artists, each with their own distinct artistic voice, engage in conversation under this magnificent roof. Here contrasting aesthetics are explored; on the one hand there are objects that seem

bold and intense, on the other hand, reflective and serene. For *Odd and Even – a Collection* we have risen to the challenge many of us face in sharing a space; to find harmony between two opposing sensibilities.

We have had so much fun entering into the conversation Aalto began here. In some cases, the dialogue began with artists who, inspired by Aalto, created pieces specifically for the show. Ptolemy Mann created the *After Aalto Triptych*, inspired by a colour palette developed by the artist Eino Kauria along with Aalto for the Paimio Sanatorium in Finland; *Maison Metameric Stack* by Edmond Byrne reflects the angular stacked modernist forms that make up the house, while Marit Tingleff's *Standing Tile Series, Black and White* is perfectly aligned with its surroundings, as is the Kari Dyrdal tapestry *Watersign IX* in the front hallway.

In bringing together building, interior and furniture, Aalto created a complete work of art at Maison Louis Carré. In creating this contemporary collection, we have had the opportunity to enter into a brief, but meaningful dialogue with his masterpiece. It's been a privilege and a joy.

Monique Deul and
Cécile Franken

Foreword

“In accordance with the wishes of the owner, the main principle is that family life and art are not separated one from the other; the tendency is the reverse, a very intimate connection between them both.”

Alvar Aalto, 1961

In the house designed by Alvar Aalto for the art dealer and collector Louis Carré, art was always an integral part of both intimate and social life. What the curators of *Odd and Even – A Collection* have achieved is to blend the works so naturally in the villa's spaces,



Ásdís Ólafsdóttir

that it seems as if they have always been there. Throughout the hall, the living room, the study and the dining room, to the bedrooms and the kitchen, these works of strong materiality and presence enhance the architecture and the materials of the interior design.

I wish to heartfully thank the curators Monique Deul and Cécile Franken, as well as the staff of Taste Contemporary, for the wonderful collaboration. Due to the pandemic, it has been a process of several years, with postponements and hesitations, but the result was worth it! I also wish to express my gratitude to the artists, for their patience and the high quality works they have entrusted us with, many of which were made especially for this exhibition. The photographs by Aurélien Mole and this catalogue remain as a witness of this enchanting experience.

Ásdís Ólafsdóttir
Director of Maison Louis Carré

House, Continued

My trip to *Maison Louis Carré* takes 50 minutes from the Western edge of Paris; a highway affair that meanders down to village speed a few kilometres in advance of arrival before slowing to a muffled stop at the foot of the property. Jean Monnet's house, opposite the gated entrance, reminds me of the Carré's world-savvy affluence and amplifies my sense of entering a sacralised space for a unique and short-lived experience. Small groups of past visitors dot the walk up the hill. Their voices subside once I enter the house, don blue plastic protective shoe covers, and insert myself in the human circle of the guided tour. As I shuffle into the group, I look up at the famed imported Finnish pine ceiling, register the dialogue between its parallel lines and Kari Dyrdal's *Watering IX*, just below, and how the ceiling's hull-like canopy steers the eyes from entrance hall to living room and onward toward the outside greens. I have become a spectator.

Benjamin Lignel

I came to look at Monique Deul and Cécile Franken's *Odd and Even – A Collection*, a selection and arrangement of contemporary objects, but our guide, Mariska Harbonn, focuses on the building's genesis, 60-odd years ago. Through the prism of the patron's open-ended invitation and the architect's pervasive response to it, she is slowly rebuilding the house from scratch through stories that trace the provenance of forms and materials back to forests and quarries, Aalto's individual team members and previous projects, and early influences.

Everything “comes from,” and is intentional. Aside from us (the visitors) and them (the newly installed artworks), the house, its grounds, and the November light itself, come together into a complete creative work; a homogenous design capsule from 1959 that brought under the same roof a cosmopolitan couple and their servants and performed a mix of social and private functions.

The exhibition title, I am told, alludes to differing personalities and I ask myself, as I take in the exquisite modernist compound, which aspects of this monument to artistic patronage and architectural vision does the contemporary work resonate with?

We pass the ticket desk and enter the dining room. Ptolemy Mann's *After Aalto Triptych* in woven viscose, opposite the bay window, responds to the lawn's autumnal shade and illuminates the low-ceiling room with vertical bands of vibrant green, oranges and blues. On the long dining table, Edmond Byrne's glass *Maison Metameric Stack* – three concentric crusts of yellow, pink, and orange – offer a tree-like, vein-like counterpoint to Aino Aalto's tiered floral *Blomma* vases, an arm's length away. There is a small, slanted window in the room's far wall, designed to let in the late afternoon sun; a bright, mottled *Yellow Object* by Heidi Bjørgan nests there like a crumpled shell or hardened sketch on a makeshift plinth.

The placement of these three works near/on habitual sites of use (the table) or contemplation (the wall), via the intermediate display space of the window ledge, sets the tone for subsequent encounters with exhibition works. In dialogue with, and on the paths set by the textures, colours and functions of individual rooms, they very gradually and tentatively emerge as *objects for seeing* against the backdrop of the house. Some of them, like Pernille Braun's exquisite sagging glass loops, or Martin Bodilsen Kaldahl's proliferating forms, quiver with the expectation of some form of handling, like instruments on hold, and gently allude to the living.

Odd and Even – A Collection, comprises forty works in textile, glass, clay and wood. All, bar three, were made over the last fifteen years by European makers represented by the Geneva-based gallery, Taste Contemporary. Some were conceived specially for this project and are inspired by the atmosphere of the house, the size and function of its rooms, or by specific aspects of Aalto's oeuvre.



Mann's weaves, for example, reference the colour palette devised for Aalto's Sanatorium project in Paimio (1933), while Marit Tingleff's *Standing Tile Series, Black and White*, placed over the living room fireplace, is a nod to the Zebra-covered version of Aalto's popular 1936 *Tank* armchair. All in all, this group of site-specific works, the curators' nimble selection and sensitive placement and intuition that this custom-made house and these crafted objects originated in similar skill environments, lend enormous credibility to the notion that all of the exhibited objects somehow belong there.

And yet, because it is a complete and *completed* architectural programme that remains rooted to its 1950s aesthetics, Maison Louis Carré could arguably be a challenging stage for contemporary craft practices: it leads us to wonder how legible are contemporary works within a visually dated and socially outdated context?¹

Unlike *Call to the Wild* (2020), or Junod-Ponsard's *A Vertical Wandering* (2019), two recent Maison Louis Carré projects whose intrusive or supplemental dimensions are much more explicit, *Odd and Even – A Collection* follows a stealthy curatorial approach. The exhibits' material properties, and the spectatorship they encourage, do not contradict the homely environment they occupy, or broadcast a claim to autonomy. Instead, they were chosen to "sing in harmony with the house"² and to benefit from the excessive attention that every detail in the *house-museum* calls for. In other words, in a less contrasted or self-aware way than they would in a white cube environment, these exogenous exhibits vibrate from the attention given to their endogenous environment, whose qualities they seem to prolong. Not quite *functioning* objects, they nonetheless come alive in the dense crossfire of the rooms' original uses, rich material palette and changing atmosphere.

¹ Only two pieces of furniture not designed by Aalto – a spinning bookshelf in mahogany and a lectern – were present in the original house.

² Curators Monique Deul and Cécile Franken, in conversation with the author, November 10, 2021.

The successful integration of *Odd and Even – A Collection* in Maison Louis Carré makes me want to frame its curatorial success in the light of the two different exhibition models it implicitly refers to: the "house-museum" and the sample/ideal house produced by realtors or museums.

The preservation of important private collections *in situ* got a new wind in the early 20th century when industrialists, bankers, and dealers, i.e. the merchant class, picked up the social uplift baton from aristocrats and clergymen.³ They began bequeathing their estates and collections to the public in a movement parallel, and slightly antithetical to, the expansion of state-run exhibitionary complexes and the gradual removal of signs of domesticity in public collections. House-museums resist the short century's gradual phasing out of private taste in favour of professional connoisseurship.

³ See for example Sergei Shchukin's and Ivan Morozov's Mansion in the Soviet Union (1923 & 1928), Henry Clay Frick's Collection (1935) in the US, or Harold Acton's villa La Pietra in Florence (1994). These men walk in the footsteps of aristocrats like count Poldi Pezzoli' (his casa-museum opened in 1881) or Canon Barnett's philanthropic work for the Whitechapel Picture Exhibitions (1888-onward) which wasn't a house-turned-museum, but remains a model of top-down cultural philanthropy of the late 19th century.

Like princely collections before them, they celebrate their owner's visionary discernment, patronage, and preservation efforts.⁴

Sample-houses, meanwhile, are design fictions (utopias, even) channelling cost-effective, integrated aesthetic and material visions of "modern living." Aalto's work is very much part of that Western, post-war narrative. His pioneering use of plywood was featured in the MoMA's *Organic Design in Home Furnishing* competition (1941) and heralded the New York museum's subsequent *International Competition for Low-Cost Furniture Design* (1949). In both instances – like in the many decorative arts, design and appliances fairs that sprang up across Europe – domestic re-staging's were used to promote post-war industrial efforts and teach modern home economics to the growing urban middle-class.⁵

⁴ As time passes, their appeals has arguably had as much to do with the quality of their collections as with the voyeuristic pleasures in seeing the domestic trappings of extreme affluence or fame.

⁵ See also, for interesting antecedents, Duchamp-Villon's *Cubist House* (1912), and closer to house's creation, the pre-war exhibitions of the Union des Artistes Modernes, and later, the postwar Salons des Arts Ménagers.

Conceived from the onset as both patrimonial testament and modernist showcase, *Maison Louis Carré* sits midway between these two models. Carré's desire to preserve Aalto's work for posterity – to treat it as future heritage – is well documented.⁶ Its vocation as a sample of modern living, meanwhile, is less explicitly articulated, or applicable outside a small social circle. The lifestyle and material culture it showcases is privileged, cosmopolitan, extremely discerning and deliberate. It will remain the made-to-measure, one-of-a-kind, brain-child of a wealthy patron of the arts.

The inherent contradictions of this modernist time capsule project casts the exhibited artworks in an odd, but ultimately favourable light. They feed off the house's strong link to private patronage and, in this context, seem to advocate for an appreciation of craft as expression of affluence and visionary taste.

The familiar dialogue between the house and these works, muffles the more obvious narrative it would usually serve. In the house's private and public-facing spaces the objects are also allowed, and this is important, to deploy their compelling presence outside of the craft/art debate⁷ and to make multiple and concurrent arguments about what they are. In the living room, Andrea Walsh's *Pair of Contained Boxes* were deliberately placed so that the light of the autumn sun would bounce off their lid, refract through the container, and spotlight the ceiling above, a placement that celebrates resonances between object, architecture and changing atmospheric conditions, thereby extending the life of Aalto's and Carré's vision into the ever-changing present.

⁶ This notion was present in Louis Carré's mind from the start: he sought to have both the site and its furniture listed as early as 1962. The listing in the Monuments historiques was granted in 1996, and ensures the house will be preserved as is forever.

⁷ For a discussion on how exhibitions stake claims about the status of craft, see for example Laura Grey, *Museums and the Interstices of Domestic Life* (2011); Laura Breen, *Redefining Ceramics Through Exhibitionary Practice (1970-2009)* (2014); Benjamin Lignel (ed.), *Shows and Tales – On jewelry Exhibition Making* (2015); and Lisa Vinebaum, *Outside the White Cube* (2017).

I think of this as I wipe away a speck of hot water that I spilled on the house's kitchen floor while preparing a pot of tea. Our guide is describing the current use of the house by design and architecture students. I listen in, while looking outside at the evening blues settling on Bodilsen Kaldahl's *The State of a Moment* and I think of Yanagi Soetsu's praise of functional beauty.

Benjamin Lignel
November 2021

Benjamin Lignel is an educator, writer, curator and maker. He guest-teaches at HDK-Valand (Göteborg), Alchimia (Florence), the Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Nürnberg), and is core faculty in Warren Wilson College's Master in Critical Craft Studies (Swannanoa). He is on the editorial advisory board of the *Journal of Jewellery Research*, and on the board of the Knowledge House for Craft. His work is represented in several public collections. He lives in Montreuil (France).





'Throughout her career, Britton has remained committed to the ceramic container, exploring both its formal possibilities and its capacity to hold and communicate thoughts and ideas. Her pots are marked by ambiguity and contradiction, sitting between the sculptural and the everyday, the civilised and the wild, the real and the imagined.'

Alun Graves, curator,
V&A Museum, London, UK

Right:
Alison Britton, *Cadence*, 2017
Handbuilt, high fired Earthenware poured
and painted with slips and glazes
43H x 29W x 25D cm



'My work is an exploration of the box and vessel form, through which I am interested in ideas of containment, materiality, preciousness and value. Working with glass in combination with fine bone china, I seek to celebrate their shared material qualities including purity and translucency.'

Andrea Walsh

Right:
Andrea Walsh, *Pair of Contained Boxes [Clear Frit & Gold and Yellow Frit & White]*, 2016
Lost Wax Cast Glass, Fine Bone China, 22ct Burnished Gold
7.5H x 10.75W x 8D cm



'Littoral Chances II comes from observations of stacked and balanced heaps of crates and boxes, often the paraphernalia of the fishing trades. I am struck by the balance, rightness, and beauty of these chance compositions, of how stacked and piled objects present themselves sculpturally in the round. It is one of an ongoing series of works developed with the enamel artist Helen Carnac where we integrate our working materials as an integrated part of the work's construction.'

David Gates

Right:
David Gates featuring Helen Carnac,
Littoral Chances II, 2017
European Oak, Bog Oak, Bird's
Eye Maple, Ripple Sycamore, Cedar
of Lebanon, Douglas Fir, Steel
110H x 76W x 37D cm



'For this work I place selected coloured cylinders together and stack them to create a crosslink between each nuanced colour hue, bringing forth a subtle symphony of interactions and realisations to be discovered and contemplated within the context of the Maison Louis Carré dining room.'
Edmond Byrne

Right:
Edmond Byrne,
Maison Metameric Stack, 2021
Glass
19H x 28W x 28D cm



'I enjoy creating glass forms that completely destroy the ideas of standard normality. Instead, the unconventional emerges as a powerful statement, a refreshing break from tradition reaching out to alter viewer expectations.'
Fredrik Nielsen

Right:
Fredrik Nielsen,
Flower Vase #2 out of 10, 2020
Glass
40H x 30W x 30D cm



'I collect overlooked objects.
I give these forms a second chance
in a new guise, in a new context
and sometimes I even add a new
function. As an artist my aim is
through sampling and remaking
to explore the aesthetic potential
of the shapes of these objects.'

Heidi Bjørgan

Right:
Heidi Bjørgan, *The Yellow Object*, 2020
Stoneware and Earthenware
25H x 15W x 15D cm
*Forestgreen 22 – Heidi Bjørgan
featuring Linda Sormin*, 2015
Earthenware, Stoneware and Fur
40H x 29W x 17D cm



'Nagel uses unorthodox means to fashion volumes within the familiar typology of the vase. But as he works, he follows his instincts, departing from predictable pot-shapes that could be envisioned in the mind. Unlike wheel-throwing, the more traditional means of rapidly forming clay, his works of course need not be symmetrical. He has been able to find forms that are novel, lopsided, strange. Seamless and complete, they have the quality of things born, not made.'
Glenn Adamson, curator and writer

Right:
Johannes Nagel,
Armoured Vase #2, 2020
Porcelain
37H x 50W x 35D cm



'All my works place themselves between representation and abstraction, reality and illusion.'
Kari Dyrdal



Right:
Kari Dyrdal, *Watersign IX*, 2021
Mixed Fiber Materials
167H x 400W cm

'The circle dares you; you can attack its perfect round form by creating another circle, you can confront it by confronting it with itself. The circle reveals itself in repeatedly new transformations.'
Maria van Kesteren

Right:
Maria van Kesteren,
No 26, 1978
Wood
9H x 18W x 18D cm

No 60, 1987 – 1990
Wood
8H x 30W x 30D cm

No 18, 1978 – 1980
Wood
7H x 15W x 15D cm



'Marit Tingleff's oeuvre can be considered as much the work of a painter as that of a ceramicist. But she chose ceramics as a firmer and more materially imposing 'canvas', better attuned to her own unique vision and her desire to transcribe her human impressions of her natural surroundings. This abstract interpretation of an intimate landscape pays particular attention to the textures and colours that are superimposed, patinated, brushed, rubbed or effaced – undoubtedly in a more sumptuous manner than she could have obtained by opting for oil on canvas.'

Frédéric Bodet, curator and writer

Right:
Marit Tingleff, *Standing Tile series, Black and White*, 2020
Hand built earthenware,
decorated with running slips and
glazed with a transparent glaze
83H x 110W x 10D cm



'The inspiration for my works springs from a serial work process where the visual expression gradually crystallizes through a long series of experiments. Ultimately, the combinations of form, ornament and image will appear simple and easy to decode, while remaining open to a variety of possible interpretations of content.'
Martin Bodilsen Kaldahl

Right:
Martin Bodilsen Kaldahl,
Spatial Drawing #13, 2015
Earthenware
65H x 46W x 36D cm



'I am concerned primarily with abstract imagery and the translation of drawn marks into cloth. By making work that is pieced, patched and assembled, I aim to create pieces that explore repetition, pattern and the disrupted or dissonant journey of line and image across and through the surface of cloth.'

Matthew Harris

Right:
Matthew Harris, *Lambeth
Lantern Cloth Variation No VI*, 2021
Acrylic Paint and Linen Thread
on Hand Stitched and
Constructed Cotton Cloth
51H x 69W cm



'I believe the most innovative work emanates from a synthesis of historical and contemporary sources, based upon an assured understanding of both comparative technique and historical precedent. Materials are imbued with both a practical and conceptual dimension. I'm interested in embedded content, how we build and enrich an idea. My works recognise no hierarchy in approach or discipline; my visual language is a synthesis of craft, painterly, design and sculptural traditions.'

Michael Brennand-Wood

Right:
Michael Brennand-Wood,
White Lace – Flag Day, 2006
Embroidered and Mixed Media
85H x 85W x 7D cm



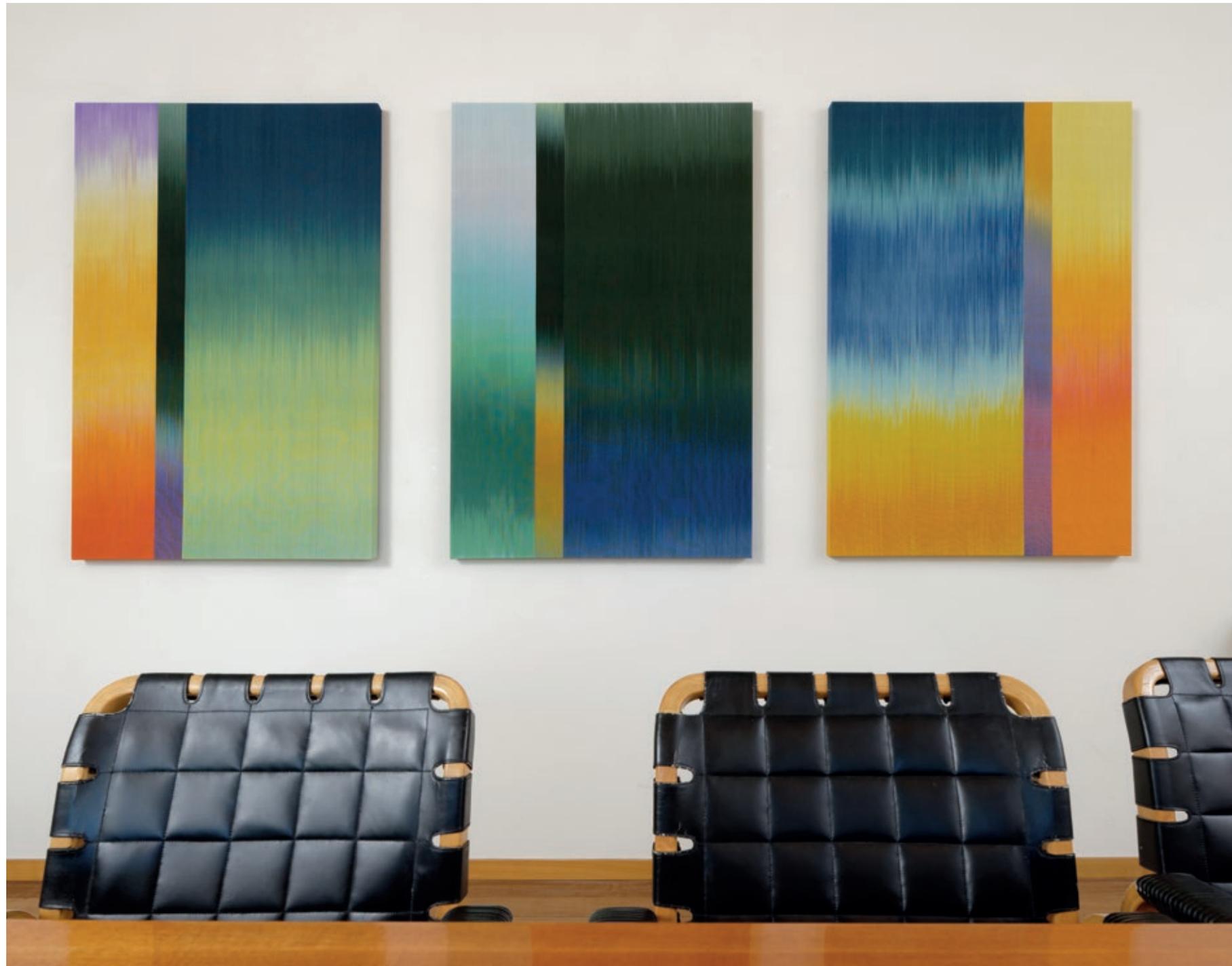
'My artistic practice is based on abstract investigations and reproductions of specific objects and themes that experiment with new perspectives regarding time, place and matter. I question, seek to understand and challenge our constructed reality and the definitions that form our foundation of understanding.'

Pernille Braun

Right:
Pernille Braun, *Fast Forward
Heavy Load [Blue/White]*, 2014
Glass, Oak and Copper
54H x 63W x 16D cm



'After Aalto is a series of hand dyed and woven thread paintings inspired by the colour palette developed by the artist Eino Kauria with Alvar Aalto for The Paimio Sanatorium, which was completed in 1933.'
Ptolemy Mann



Right:
Ptolemy Mann, *After Aalto*
(*Orange Gold Green*), (*Dark Viridian Aqua*) and (*Teal Yellow*), 2021
Hand Dyed and Woven Viscose
120H x 80W cm (each panel)

'A resolved work for Leonard is a piece that is suspended in the slim interstice between her will and the clay's refusal of it. A work might crack in the kiln, requiring a surgical procedure of resins, glazes and lustre, the application of which – as thick and as craggy as possible – provides another opportunity for her to approach the form's limits; the point at which it seems to be heaving under its own extravagance.'

Connie Brown, writer and curator

Right:
Virginia Leonard, *I Come Out
of Surgery Looking Golden*, 2018
Clay, Lustre and Resin
90H x 53W x 53D cm



Alison Britton OBE

Britain, b.1948

Today a leading British ceramic artist, Britton was one of an influential group of students who came out of the Royal College of Art, London in the 1970s. Their radical work challenged and deconstructed notions of ceramics and particularly functional pottery – a movement that came to be known as ‘The New Ceramics’.

Britton has concentrated on making, studying and understanding pots. Her distinctive sculptural works blur the line between art and craft. Works are hand-built from rolled slabs of clay, not thrown on a wheel. Surfaces are exuberantly covered with marks that refer to modern painting as much as the decorative patterns that tend to belong to craft, and by pouring and painting slip, then glaze, across their surfaces.

Her pots have authority and confidence, they appear to have been conceived and constructed by a maker at ease with her materials. Britton’s work has always embraced awkwardness and it resists classification, it is as much about form as it is about surface.

Working from a London studio over four decades, she has an international exhibition profile, writes and lectures on current practice across a broad art and design field, and curates exhibitions.

Her work can be seen in major public and private collections worldwide, including the V&A, London; Boijmans van Beuningen Museum, Rotterdam, Holland; Australian National Gallery, Canberra; National Museum of Modern Art, Kyoto; and Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris. She taught MA and research students at the Royal College of Art in London for over three decades and was a Senior Tutor for Ceramics and Glass.

Alison Britton was awarded the OBE in 1990.



Andrea Walsh

Britain, b.1974

Andrea Walsh established her studio in 2005 following the completion of a degree in fine art, and postgraduate study in glass at Edinburgh College of Art. A significant contribution to her practice has been the award of residencies, the most notable being the ‘Artist into Industry Residency’ through the British Ceramics Biennial – a project with the ‘Minton’ brand based at the Wedgwood ceramics factory in Stoke-on-Trent (UK), which facilitated learning directly from master craftsmen, and allowed privileged access to historical archives. This opportunity continues to influence her practice to the present day.

Andrea has established a growing exhibition profile in the UK and internationally. Her work has been shortlisted for the

British Ceramics Biennial Award on three occasions, purchased for major public collections including the V&A Museum, London and National Museums Scotland. In 2017 she was a finalist in the BBC Radio 4/V&A Museum/Crafts Council ‘Woman’s Hour Craft Prize’ while in 2019 she was a finalist in the LOEWE Foundation Craft Prize. Andrea Walsh lives and works in Edinburgh, UK.



David Gates

Britain, b. 1966

Two consistent touchstones of David Gates's work are its relationship to a particular type of architecture, and the notion of the collecting cabinet. Drawn to industrial and agricultural architecture and infrastructure, he observes a peculiar rightness in many of these structures related to their expediency, function, and immediacy. Their rationality and utility generate a sculptural and aesthetic integrity. Assemblages of mass, volume, balance, and structure, each piece is also wholly functional. Spaces, interiors, ledges, and shelves reveal themselves through doors, tambours, drawers, and fall-flaps. These are modern interpretations of the collecting cabinet. Works are made as unique pieces; precise and deliberate hand-making (including using machinery in non-automated ways) is often the most appropriate way to realise a design.

Traditional construction and joinery methods are selected because of their rightness; intersections of various components are visible. Joinery, beyond being visually interesting itself, indexes what happens below the surface.

Living and working in the UK, David Gates' practice combines studio furniture-making with formal research. His work is exhibited and collected internationally. He received the Gold Award at the Cheongju biennale 2015 and was a winner of the Jerwood Contemporary Makers 2010.



Edmond Byrne

Ireland, b. 1977

Edmond Byrne's glass vessels reflect the present and resonate with the past. The narrative suggested through drawing and the creation of marks, provide him with inspiration while patina and cracks added to the glass surface are reminiscent of the weathering of ancient Roman glass.

The resulting work captures a series of primal emotions such as fear, happiness and anger, which come from different parts of the mind. This is expressed through a multi-toned translucent landscape where vessels are juxtaposed, clustered or placed inside one other. The effect is to create both a sense of containment and order as well as the notion of layered surfaces being slightly hidden or barely seen.

Edmond Byrne's technique involves the creation of hand-made moulds, which are lined with materials such as clay, fabric, plaster and metal to create patinas and cracks on the surface of vessels.



Fredrik Nielsen

Sweden, b. 1977

Inspired by aspects of popular culture, Fredrik Nielsen assimilates graffiti, music, videos and performance within his practice as a glass artist creating large-scale works that challenge existing hierarchies within art and contemporary craft. Largely experimental, his works defy the notion of smooth finishes and balanced forms, often appearing unfinished and rough around the edges, sometimes even incorporating other elements such as car paint to recreate the energy experienced by the artist while making the work.

Originally studying glass at the Orrefors Glass School in Sweden, Nielsen went on to study at both the Pilchuck Glass School in Washington and the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. He has also completed an Artist-in-Residence at Corning Museum of Glass. In his work he questions the concept of contemporary art glass, continuously exploring the role of the artist. Nielsen creates glass forms that completely destroy ideas of standard normality; seeking to push the material as far as it can go, his practice has even included performance elements such as acrobatics and live music.



Heidi Bjørgan

Norway, b. 1970

Heidi Bjørgan graduated from the Bergen Academy of Art and Design with a masters in Ceramic Art and Creative Curating. Just like the great American potter George Ohr [whose goal was never to make two identical works], Heidi Bjørgan challenges the notion of what a potter may be by 'removing' all traces of acquired professional skills. At times her ceramic works look as if they have melted and imploded in the kiln and her glazes are dynamic and expressive.

Rather than expressing herself through creating new forms, Bjørgan replicates the shape of non-valuable everyday objects. Already discarded as trash and now combined with clay, her

reconstructed objects are given a second chance. Presented in a new context, or even given a different function, they are imbued with new meaning, acquire a new value and offer a different aesthetic experience.

Heidi Bjørgan is represented in the collections of the National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo; Bergen Art Museum KODE, Bergen; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway; the V&A Museum, London as well as in several private collections around the world.

She lives and works in Bergen, Norway.



Johannes Nagel

Germany, b. 1979

The subject of Johannes Nagel's work is, specifically, the improvised and provisional. The objects are finished in that the porcelain is painted (glazed) and fired. Most objects are somehow vessels, pots. What else are they? The attempt to confuse the connotations that technology and material provoke. At times constructive composing, at times wilful destruction, sometimes vases, sometimes fragments or alienated object.

Using work techniques such as burrowing into sand to form negative figurations for casting, Johannes Nagel successfully performs his work directly and manually, lending the process of searching a tangible presence. The joints and fissures, the blots of colour and unfinished painting appear provisional as they point from the finished object back to the process. It is not the perfection of the ultimate expression that is intended, but to verbalize a concept of the evolution of things.



Kari Dyrdal

Norway, b. 1952

As a little girl, Kari Dyrdal learned embroidery from her grandmother and so began a lifelong interest in textiles. As an adult, she studied textile design at both Bergen Kunsthåndverkskole and at Croydon College of Art and Technology, London. Creating large-scale woven pieces, Dyrdal espouses the traditional methods and techniques of weaving while at the same time using new digital tools both in the research and production of her work. For this artist, theme and concept are researched through construction, both visually and materially in the loom with her starting point being her photographs, which are transformed to woven surfaces.

The challenge is to give content to the technique and textural quality to the surface, to create work with a strong tactile presence that also has an intellectual dimension.

Kari Dyrdal's work is included in a number of public collections including the National Museum, Oslo; the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and the KODE/Vestlandske Kunstinstitutt, Bergen. She lives and works in Norway where she is also professor in the Faculty of Art, Music and Design at the University of Bergen.



Maria van Kesteren

The Netherlands,
1933 – 2020

Maria van Kesteren emerged as one of the first prominent female woodturners in the late 1950s. Making simple, beautifully proportioned bowl and box forms, her forms and smooth surfaces contrasted with the material she shaped. The wood was secondary to the forms she created, which were almost always a circle.

She used the circular form as a starting point and utilised the tension between inner and outer forms. Surfaces were evenly stained or painted so that the detail of the grain became secondary to their formal properties and fine definitions of interior and exterior space. She applied similar principles in style to her glass and ceramic objects. Even though her objects appeared severe, when carefully examining the subtle curves and transitions, an unquestionably tender side to her work became apparent.

Maria trained with the woodturner Henk van Trierum in Utrecht in the late 1950s and lived in Hilversum, Netherlands. Although most celebrated for her works in wood, she also designed glass for Royal Leerdam and ceramics for factories including Koninklijke Tichelaar Makkum. A major retrospective exhibition of her work was held at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam in 1995.

Maria van Kesteren's work is widely collected and can be found in private and museum collections including the Cooper Hewitt, New York; Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam; the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; the V&A Museum, London and Museum of Arts and Design, New York.



Marit Tingleff

Norway, b. 1954

Marit Tingleff is one of Norway's most celebrated contemporary ceramic artists. Initially studying at the National College of Art and Design in Bergen, she went on to become Professor and Head of Ceramics at Oslo National Academy of the Arts [KHiO] from 2013 – 2016. Her work is expressive, with strongly ornamental features and undulating, organic lines. Taking the landscape of her own daily life as a starting point for her large-scale ceramic plates, she takes ordinary, everyday objects and elevates them to something much more powerful. Her painterly application of colourful glazes reference nature, land and seascapes and despite a complex process of glazing and firing, she maintains an incredible sense of spontaneity, balancing areas of light and dark, pattern and empty space while playing with different ways of mark making.

Marit Tingleff has exhibited widely and was one of the key exhibitors during the Oslo International Ceramics Symposium in 2003 when her work was

included in *Concentus*, the main OICS exhibition at the Museum of Decorative Arts and Design. Her international breakthrough came when she participated in the exhibition *Scandinavian Craft Today*, which travelled to Japan and the USA in 1987 – 1988.

Her work is included in a number of museums including The National Museum/The Museum of Decorative Art, Oslo, Norway; Design Museum, Copenhagen and the V&A Museum, London. She has been awarded several public commissions including work for the Norwegian Government Representation Buildings, Oslo, Norway.



Martin Bodilsen Kaldahl

Denmark, b. 1954

Martin Bodilsen Kaldahl was educated at the Royal College of Art in London. Over the years he has worked with a number of different spatial themes that frequently re-occur in his formal vocabulary. These include the rhythmic and ornamental possibilities of, and around, the knot; the logic of natural, genetically based form meeting constructed and virtual form and intuitive spatial form.

His works are represented in several public and private collections including the V&A Museum, London; The Danish Museum of Art & Design, Copenhagen; The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo and Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.

Martin Bodilsen Kaldahl lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Matthew Harris

Britain, b. 1966

A graduate of the textile course at Goldsmiths College, Matthew Harris makes work that employs painting, cutting and hand stitching. He has worked with textiles since 2000, having previously created and exhibited drawings and works on paper. His work is concerned primarily with abstract imagery and the translation of drawn marks into cloth. By making work that is pieced, patched and assembled, he aims to create pieces that explore repetition, pattern and the disrupted or dissonant journey of line and image across and through the surface of cloth.

He has shown in a number of group and solo exhibitions throughout the UK, Ireland, US and Japan and his work has been acquired by The Whitworth Museum and Art Gallery and the Shipley Museum and Art Gallery. It is also included in numerous private collections. In 2014 he took part in *Field Notes*, a collaborative project with the British Composer Howard Skempton and Birmingham Contemporary Music Group. In 2009, he completed *Scorched*, a ten metre long Graphic Score for the newly refurbished Colston Hall music venue in Bristol.

Matthew Harris lives and works in Britain.



Michael Brennand-Wood

Michael Brennand-Wood has an international reputation as one of the most innovative and inspiring artists working in textiles today. Drawing in fabrics, his work is both sculptural and tactile. He is particularly interested in embroidery, lace-making and traditions in floral textiles. He uses his knowledge in these ancient crafts and combines them with modern day techniques, such as digital printing and computerized machine embroidery, to create sculptural, wall-hung, textile and multimedia pieces. Although his work is first and foremost decorative, it can be read on more than one level. He uses titles to allude to the source of inspiration for each one of his works. Recent flag-based pieces, for example, reveal their reference to conflict and war when seen up close.

Britain, b. 1952

Born in Bury, Lancashire, Michael Brennand-Wood has over 40 years experience as a practicing artist. He has lectured at Goldsmiths College, London and has taught and held residencies at universities in Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and Belgium. He was appointed Professor of Art-Politics in Ornament at Wolverhampton University in 2013.

Michael Brennand-Wood's work has been commissioned by numerous organisations and is represented in private and public collections worldwide including the V&A Museum, London; the National Gallery of Australia and the National Museum of Modern Art in Kyoto, Japan.



Pernille Braun

Sculpting with glass for more than two decades, Pernille Braun has participated in a large number of exhibitions internationally including solo exhibitions in France, Denmark and USA. In her work, she investigates aspects of time, place and matter, which, with a great level of craftsmanship, she explores through the medium of glass.

Denmark, b. 1978

Braun studied at The Royal Danish Academy of Art, School of Design and gained a Master's degree from the Royal College of Art in London in 2008. Her work can be found in the collections of the Danish Art Foundation, Copenhagen; Musée Ariana, Genève; Bornholm Art Museum, Denmark; the Design Museum, Denmark and the V&A Museum, London.

Pernille Braun lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Ptolemy Mann

Britain, b. 1972

Since 1997 Ptolemy Mann has been running her own studio practice, which she established after graduation from Central Saint Martins and the Royal College of Art, London. Her unique approach to hand dyeing and weaving wall-based, architectural art works has become the basis for a modern-day Bauhaus philosophy of art making and design underpinned with intelligent colour theory.

Her time consuming and unique approach to creating these art works has evolved over a twenty-year period. Exquisite dynamics of colour move across their fine surface creating a painterly sweep.

The term CHROMATIC MINIMALISM has been applied to her work and she is heavily influenced by Abstract Expressionism and architecture. Mann is interested in making large scale, emotional work that expresses a deep sense of craftsmanship and precision through an abstract narrative. She has completed many large-scale, site-specific, commissions including one for the 9th floor restaurant in the Blavatnik building at the Tate Modern, London. Mann also exhibits and lectures regularly throughout the UK and internationally.



Virginia Leonard

New Zealand, b. 1965

The emotional, emotive and intensely personal ceramic works created by artist Virginia Leonard are powerful self-portraits that address her bodily scarring and experiences of chronic pain – the result of injuries obtained in a serious motorbike accident in London in 1986, which left her hospitalised for two years.

The maturity of these works belies the fact that Leonard only began working with clay in 2013. However, her ceramic practice has followed a successful painting career in her native New Zealand. Her painterly approach is evident in her current work in which she moves clay as she would have moved paint on a canvas, making the material gestural as she builds her constructions.

Chronic pain has no biological value, modern medicine cannot reliably treat it; it lacks both language and voice. For Leonard the language of the clay is an attempt to rid her body of trauma and reduce her level of chronic pain. Clay is visceral, oozy and clumpy. It resembles bodily scarring but is also a precarious medium, which serves as a reminder of the fragility of her body. Her work has been acquired by a number of public and private collections including Musée Ariana, Geneva and the Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney.

Virginia Leonard lives and works in Auckland, New Zealand.





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