

Exhibition

General coordination and curatorship Zahava Seewald,
director/curator of the Municipal Museums of Anderlecht

Activities in the wings

- 11 March > *Duo Plasma* – Serpent & Electronica concert
- 2 April > Nocturnes Brussels Museums
- 17, 18, 19 April > *Itinérart*
- 26 April > Erfgoeddag
- 13 May > Concert *Happy Birthday Haendel!!!*
- 27 May > Family workshop
- 20 September > Finissage Long *Live the Circus!*

OLÉ DÉSIÉ!

Yves Malfliet

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The caustic, theatrical world of artist Yves Malfliet (Hamme, BE, 1962), is taking over the rooms of the Erasmus House Museum

The exhibition, entitled *Olé Désiré!*, reveals a series of recent works, some of them for the first time and created for the occasion. His off-beat vision of humankind's condition contrasts strikingly with the sanctuary of religious knowledge and writings of the Renaissance that is the Erasmus House Museum. Yves Malfliet gives the rules and standards of ceramic craftsmanship short shrift, taking secret delight in doing exactly the opposite of what is supposed to be done. With this exhibition, the museum once again brings to the fore an art that has clearly gained in popularity these last few years. Malfliet's works converse with those in the permanent displays, the paintings, furniture, lighting and mood of the premises. They also echo a lengthy tradition that combines pottery with household uses, cooking and tableware and the creation of cooking utensils and decoration. Malfliet may hark back to this tradition by using old-fashioned decorative items from his family cupboards, but he transforms these objects to create his own stories.

A pioneer in the recognition of pottery in art

Malfliet was poorly understood at the start of his career, for his ceramic work could not be seen as the type of craftsmanship that was still the standard at the time. As the years went by, the world of pottery came to a turning point: artists who shared similar views emerged, galleries opened their doors to their work, and pottery was recognised as a genuine means of artistic expression. Craftsmanship has little importance in Malfliet's eyes. His creations also stand out through his use of recycled materials. The ceramic items that he finds in second-hand shops, and which are often recurrent elements in his creations, are also a signature of his work. These fragments are included in a clay pedestal or assembled to form a new object, and then reglazed to unify the whole. Although the technical concepts of building, firing and glazing a piece are part of his artistic background, in his view, conceptual and artistic power must go beyond craftsmanship. The history and poetry of his work must be so strong, so present, that one no longer thinks about technique and craftsmanship.

“I am alone in my artistic expression, which does not fit into the contemporary trends of today's art world and ceramics. Perhaps that is also what makes it stimulating, for it is not common in the world of ceramics to concentrate solely on the conceptual, the idea, the poetic; attention often focuses as well on working the matter (craftsmanship). For me, craftsmanship is not a philosophy and is not subordinate to a concept. It is merely a tool to express my ideas”.

Biography

Born in Hamme, Belgium, in 1962, Yves Malfliet enrolled in classic training in pottery in Antwerp under the guidance of Achiel Pauwels, with whom he shared a sense of the poetry of their work. He then went on to the Higher Institute for Fine Arts (HISK), where, after a rigorous process of selection, he was given the opportunity to work in his own workshop to develop his own artistic language. He also studied at Universidad de La Laguna in Tenerife, Spain. Malfliet regularly takes part in international competitions. Aside from the last Faenza prize – the most important award in contemporary pottery – in 2023, he also won a prize at the Vallauris Biennial (France), in 2014. Another striking moment was that of the Naspä Förderpreis, awarded by the Westerwald Museum. He also won the Andenne Ceramics Prize, in Belgium, in 2016. His achievements over the years have enabled him to weave a broad web of international friendships, a source of human enrichment that he considers invaluable. His work was exhibited recently at the *Anciens Abattoirs* (former slaughterhouse) of Mons and the Keramis Museum. His works can be found in some major international collections, including those of the Musée La Piscine (Roubaix, France), Westerwald Museum (Germany), Musée Magnelli (Vallauris, France), M.I.C. (Faenza) and Yingge Museum (Taipei, Taiwan). His work is displayed at the Sofie Van den Bussche Gallery in Brussels, Belgium.