

Paul Philp

8 October – 17 November 2012



An esteemed ceramicist for over 40 years, Paul Philp exhibits new work at Willer this autumn. This series shows a move towards more architectural forms, although the fundamental practice of creating shapes “that look as if they have happened by a natural process” - Philp’s guiding principle – remains. The new shapes characteristically evoke a timeless aesthetic, pared down to essentials and rendered in Philp’s beautiful restrained palette.

Having long studied and used traditional methods, combined with original and unconventional techniques, Philp slowly hand builds all his pieces. He works in stoneware, creating rugged, gritty surfaces by introducing different varieties of clay and various additives that melt at high temperatures to produce the special textures, which are often further refined by fine carving inside and out.

Philp says that he wants to make pieces that look as though they have been “discovered rather than made”. He finds beauty in natural forms and uses these as his inspiration. “I have in mind rugged eroded surfaces, megaliths, fossils, ancient encrusted marbles and something of the quality of early Japanese ceramics – *Shigaraki* and *Iga* ware...”, he says. That goal, underpinned by his great knowledge of classical forms, combines to create unique enduring pieces.

Philp lived a self-sufficient life in the Welsh countryside for twenty-five years, growing his own produce, cultivating gardens of rare plants and concentrating on his ceramics. He has recently moved to a walled courtyard complex in Bath, from whence comes this new series of ceramics.

“I often wonder, after many a break – sometimes of several years duration – why I have returned to ceramics. The answer is that I find the ceramic process endlessly fascinating and challenging in spite of, at times, heartbreaking disappointments.”

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Notes to editors:

This is the second solo exhibition of Philp's work at Willer. He has been exhibiting with the gallery since 2004.

Paul Philp

Born in 1941, Paul Philp studied ceramics at Cardiff College of Art. In the seventies he was a visiting lecturer at Central School of Art in London and Bath School of Art in Corsham. His work is held in a number of important museum and private collections.

The Willer Gallery

At a time when contemporary art galleries and collectors are focusing on design, Willer makes the crossover with art seem effortless, and its space is testimony to the easy fusion between the two. Willer is equally comfortable staging exhibitions of Robert Rauschenberg's screen prints and the Dutch artist, Claudy Jongstra's tapestries, or selecting some of the most sophisticated porcelain, handmade silver, crystal, textiles, ceramics, sculpture and furniture.

Willer is an essential source for architects, designers and private collectors. There is a constantly changing selection of both limited edition and exclusive pieces, often developed by Willer with the artists, craftsmen and designers. Willer represents international artists and designers including Claudy Jongstra, Massimo Micheluzzi, Paul Philp, Paul Mathieu, Eric Schmitt, Christiane Perrochon and Nymphenburg.

The gallery most recently staged the first UK solo exhibition for French artist and furniture designer Paul Mathieu.

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