

## INAUGURATION OF EXTENSION AND OPENING OF NEW EXHIBITION AT CLAY H. M. The Queen is guest of honour at the official opening on 7 October

It started with a hole in the ground - but now the hole has been covered up, and underneath the green carpet of grass you'll find a new, top-secured hall and an exhibition just waiting to be discovered!

There's no doubt that 7 October will be a milestone in the history of a ceramic museum in Middelfart with big ambitions. This is the second time in just eight years that the museum has expanded its exhibition capacity. This time with a top-secured hall that puts the museum in a whole new league when it comes to displaying Danish and international ceramics from the top shelf.

The inauguration will be attended by HM The Queen of Denmark, who was also the guest of honour in 2015 when the first stage of the museum's expansion was marked.

- We are proud and very honoured that HM The Queen chooses to visit CLAY again. We know that art and ceramics are close to Her Majesty's heart. And we have no doubt that this is a genuine interest in the museum, says CLAY's director Pia Wirnfeldt, who also had the pleasure of welcoming the royal guest of honour in 2015.

The approximately €5 million project, which in addition to a new exhibition hall also includes a general security optimization of the museum, is financed by the A.P. Møller Foundation, Aage and Johanne Louis-Hansen Foundation, Augustinus Foundation and Knud Højgaard Foundation.

- We are extremely grateful to the foundations that have helped us with the establishment of the new exhibition hall, which gives us completely new development opportunities. We also owe a big thank you to Middelfart Municipality for their assistance in every way during the construction process, says Chairman of the Board Erik Jacobsen.

The 350 m<sup>2</sup> extension of the museum is located underground in direct connection with the existing exhibition halls. This has meant that the museum's daily operations have been affected by the construction for just over a year.

- We are now looking forward to using the new facilities - and to an everyday life without noise, dust and other inconveniences for our guests and employees! And we can hardly wait to unveil the fantastic opening exhibition, which we have been working on realizing for almost as long as the construction project, says Pia Wirnfeldt.

### An artistic play with fire

With the completed security optimisation, the museum is geared up for the exhibition *Playing with Fire: Edmund de Waal and Axel Salto*. Here, the English star artist and author Edmund de Waal enters into a dialogue with the stoneware master Axel Salto. The exhibition will take the form of a conversation between the two great artists, and is a meeting in words and clay, across time.

The exhibition is the museum's biggest venture to date and has been created in collaboration with Edmund de Waal, who has curated the exhibition and contributes a brand new work installation, and the Norwegian museum Kunstsilo, which manages the Tangen Collection - the world's largest collection of Nordic modernism. The collection includes a large number of works by Axel Salto.

After the show at CLAY, the exhibition will travel to the newly built Kunstsilo on the harbour front in Kristiansand and then to The Hepworth Wakefield in England in 2025.

In connection with the exhibition, the book *Playing with Fire* will be published by Forlaget Press. In the book, Edmund de Waal conveys his meeting with Axel Salto as a conversation and addresses highly topical themes such as creativity, risk and playfulness in the artistic dialogue.

The expansion of CLAY Museum of Ceramic Art Denmark is made possible through the generous support of:

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