

PERNILLE PONTOPPIDAN PEDERSEN

Vous ne pouvez pas l'avoir comme papillon préféré, s'il n'est plus là

ceramic sculpture

12.09.2025 > 31.10.2025

PRIVATE VIEW

Thursday, September 11th, 5pm > 8:30pm

MEET THE ARTIST / TALK

Thursday, October 9th at 7:30 pm

the artist will be conversing with **Margaux Brugvin**

STARTING SUNDAY

Sunday, October 19th – 2pm > 6pm – as part of Paris art week

NIGHT AT THE GALLERY, BY CANDLELIGHT

Tuesday, October 21st – 7pm > 9pm – as part of Paris art week

FAIR

21.11.2025 > 23.11.2025: LUXEMBOURG ART WEEK

Peter Martensen – Min Jung-Yeon – Bente Skjøttgaard – Yoo Hye-Sook

How innocent, how blissful, nay even how luxurious life might be, if it coveted nothing from any source but the surface of the earth, and, to speak briefly, nothing but what lies ready to her hand!

Extract from Pliny the Elder: Natural History, Book XXXIII, translated by H. Rackham (1952)

A questioning on the relationship between the self and the other: kinship and ways to “make-with” are a common thread in Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen’s recent works. *The other* here is taken in every sense of the word, including both the living, in all its forms, and the inanimate. Oscillating between observation, wonderment, and fiction—including *science fiction*—, her work draws from her double role as an artist and as farmhouse mother. Biologist, philosopher, and feminist Donna Haraway’s work is a major source of inspiration. Her central concepts—the notion of *response-ability*, her theories on *significant otherness* and *kinship**—blur the traditional lines between matter and technology, between nature and culture. Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen is also greatly interested in the work of her counterpart, Sonja Ferlov Mancoba (1911-1984). The Danish modernist’s universe is held by the idea of a human community, beyond cultures, mirroring her fascination for non-Western art, particularly African art.

At the beginning of her career, Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen’s sculptures stood as **accumulations-architecture-constructions**, where functional objects of the widest variety joined ceramic waste and salvage to form some sort of human totems or mirror of our daily lives. Through her intimate knowledge of ceramics and her research, the artist developed very early on an aesthetic of her own, by weaving failure, attempts, and irreverence through her expressive sculptures in vivid primitive language of quirky accents. Art historian Glenn Adams uses the saying “*much of a muchness*” to describe her (often surprising) way of juxtaposing composites to create new narratives.

The heroine is a pitcher, states Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen—not without humour—when evoking her latest work. This quintessential ceramic emblem throughout ages and cultures has often been a symbol of life—of what contains life—due to its curves echoing the female body and its hollowness meant to contain and preserve just like the womb. In the fauna and flora, a counterpart for the pitcher can be the cocoon, a nest of matter bound to transform into a chrysalis, then later again into an imago or a butterfly. From their symbolism and plurality, the cocoon, the butterfly, and the pitcher are often viewed as transcendental and find themselves in various mythologies.

Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen studied butterflies—these “untethered flowers” as Gérard de Nerval called them—, their anatomy, the patterns on their wings, and the colours of their “clothes” (8, 2025 and *Vous ne pouvez pas l'avoir comme papillon préféré, s'il n'est plus là* [It cannot be your favourite butterfly if it is not there anymore], 2025). Her research focused on the notions of air and mass. Thus, the artist’s interest was directed

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both at the shape she created and at the surrounding void –for the void would allow the shape to take off, somewhere, just like a butterfly.

Her new works bring together elements of varied origins, interlocked by the modelling, where the artist seeks to blur transitions, to link, to create connections in places least expected.

With her open structure in fragile equilibrium (*Famille*, 2025), her take on ready-mades with industrial jugs stacked topsy-turvy in infinite columns forming the seat of a small individual (*Untitled*, 2025), or her slender silhouettes (*Terra United*, 2025), Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen goes by her intuition. She is concerned with *moments, drives, trances –instances of movement, when things float, and thoughts and feelings stop*.*** Her love for clay, on which the slightest touch impresses itself forever on the memory of the matter, is paralleled by her love for the accuracy of words. That love can be seen through the titles of her sculptures and her original way of using language. *New knits for war(mer seasons)* (2025) is a wall relief with glaze mimicking knit stitches. Wool comes up often in her work, as a reminder of her life at the farm. She used wool to weave a copy of her to-do list (*Dosmerseddel*, 2022), cramming a school meeting, a dentist appointment, the laundry, the cleaning of the henhouse, and parcels to pick up in one day. In her research, wool can also embroider incomplete sketches on canvas before clay comes to make it whole.

Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen seeks alterity, imperfection, and a kind of chaos. By reunifying improbable elements, her works invite us both to discover what we have in common and to live the unpredictable and the trouble as a potential. With great humility, her works are an ode to boundless creativity and to the search for new ways to live together. Giving life, being, disappearing –all on the same level. The archaic rubs shoulders with the bare and the overflowing, the ugly can be beautiful, and the beautiful is constantly redefined.

*Donna Haraway: *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*.

**Glenn Adams in the monograph *mobil statue / sarkofag fartøj*, 2023.

***Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen in the monograph *mobil statue / sarkofag fartøj*, 2023.

background

At just 38, **Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen** (born in 1987, Denmark) can already boast of a brilliant career. The artist lives and works in Denmark. **She graduated from the Royal Danish Academy (design section, 2012)** in Bornholm. The artist benefitted from the Danish Arts Foundation programme, ***The Young Artistic Elite*** (2021-2022) and received several grants: **Martha og Paul René Gauguins Fond, Ole Haslunds Kunstnerlegat, Danish Arts Foundation, and Silkeborg Kunstnerlegat.**

Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen has also undertaken **large-scale commissions**. Her work is presented in several collections: at the **MAD, Paris**, at the **Designmuseum Denmark**, at the **CLAY Museum of Ceramic Art Denmark**, in the **Erik Veistруп collection**, and at the **Danish Arts Foundation**.

Since her beginnings, she has been exhibiting in galleries and art institutions in Denmark and abroad. Her work was presented in *Everyday Life – Signs of Awareness*, **21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art**, Kanazawa, Japan (2017), **Mindcraft17**, Milan (2017), at the **HB381** in New York and in Los Angeles (2021), in *Ceramic Momentum – Staging the Object*, **CLAY Museum of Ceramic Art Denmark** (2019), and in *Alkymistisk Træf*, **Vejen Kunstmuseum**, Denmark (2023).

The first presentation of Pernille Pontoppidan Pedersen's work at Galerie Maria Lund dates to the collective show ***Terres*** (2013), followed by the duo show ***Chaotiquement vôtre*** with Esben Klemann (2014), and the solo show ***rv à l'air libre*** (2020). Galerie Maria Lund also presented her work at various fairs: **Art Paris** (2023) and **Ceramic Brussels** (2024).

In 2023, *mobil statue / sarkofag fartøj*, a bilingual Danish-English monograph on her work, was published.

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