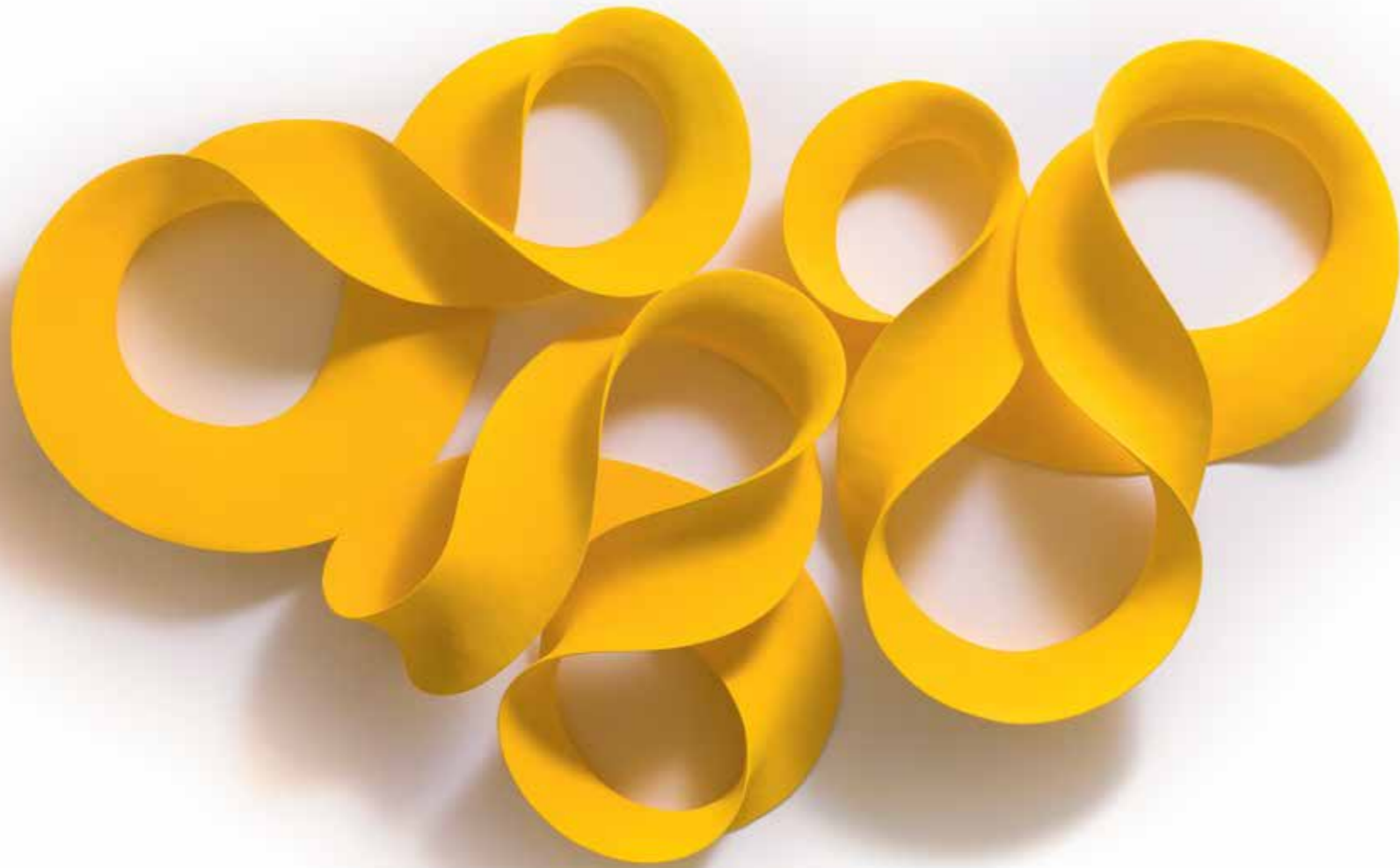




MERETE RASMUSSEN



Ouroboros
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
120 x 185 x 30 cm

FOREWORD

Whether it be physical or mental, artistic or architectural, culinary or couture, transformation is one of our most distinctive human traits. For me, an artist's ability to transform basic materials into awe-inspiring objects is endlessly enthralling and since seeing Merete Rasmussen's work at Canary Wharf for the first time in 2011, I have been fascinated by her ability to transform heavy, solid lumps of wet clay into dynamic, seemingly weightless, extraordinarily complex twists and loops. It requires enormous reserves of patience and resilience, endless hours of scraping and refining and an eye for precision as well as acute spatial awareness. Combined with Rasmussen's intuitive flare for colour it is easy to see why Rasmussen's works have been collected by major institutions and she has an impressive following of private collectors. Her work is not only technically brilliant but also a joy for the eyes.

Three years ago, Rasmussen and her family made the big decision to uproot and move out of London. Having shared a studio in Camberwell with two other talented ceramicists since ending her studies, she dreamt of building her own studio. Rasmussen and her husband settled on the gently undulating county of Sussex and found a dated bungalow ripe for improvement with a large garden, a plot for a studio and a stunning view out over a lush green valley. Balancing the challenges of settling her young daughter into a new school, DIY, architects plans, costings and re-costings, Rasmussen set up a makeshift studio in her shed at the bottom of the garden. Without a working kiln however she was forced to explore and experiment with alternative materials such as copper and wax.

Progressing in confidence from the bronze works first shown in her last exhibition, Rasmussen has created works that are distinctly hers but explore each materials' individual properties. Painted copper strips are precisely cut and manipulated to create complex forms such as the bright pink wall piece *Multiple Form*. Exquisite patinated or brushed bronzes and a polished silver have been cast directly from waxes, a material which she has only recently, yet skilfully, mastered. In these sculptures Rasmussen works the wax with gentle heat and hand to make unique objects that still bear the marks of her tools. Small and complex, these works would have been difficult to render in ceramic, and the quick, rough ceramic sketches that litter her studio highlight this but are an important part of the process for figuring out how she will build the larger works. Rasmussen has worked the same stoneware for over two decades and knows inside out its favoured assets and foibles, how it will take colour and how far she can push its tensile strength, however it is her flexibility in approach to material that has enabled her to work unencumbered by scale or lack of equipment.

As building works inevitably do, Rasmussen's studio took longer to build than planned, however a forced period out of the studio in this case seems to have been an inconvenient blessing. This exhibition is testament to a freshness of approach with Rasmussen relishing her return to a new, bright and airy studio, and creating an extraordinary body of new work that explores a number of new developments with a marked increase in confidence and maturity.

'Ouroboros', the Ancient Egyptian symbol of the serpent who bit his own tail which is used in many cultures to illustrate birth and rebirth, is here referenced in an impressive three-part wall piece that cleverly expands across the wall so that the viewer can barely tell where one part ends and the next begins. Using a bright, matt yellow slip that seems to pulsate on the wall, Rasmussen's expressive serpentine forms belie the time taken to slowly build each piece up using the equally snakelike coil technique.

Evolve is a breathtaking sculpture which Rasmussen designed to be as large as her kiln could manage and can be seen as a progression from her earlier monumental *Morphogenesis* (see pages 58-59). Exploring ideas of growth and the transition from uniform mathematical structures to organic, free-flowing forms, *Evolve* is a remarkable cuboid work that builds inwards from a regulated external carapace to an impulsive inner energy. This energy is emphasised by the fiery red to luminous orange graduated colour, a recent and exciting departure seen in a number of works in this exhibition along with the discovery of two new coloured slips seen in the works *Impetus* and *Momentum*.

Duality and the interaction between forms is also an interesting development in this new body of work with *Fragments of Repeated Form* and *Dual Form* exploring not only the negative space within the forms themselves but also the tensions between them. In *Dual Form*, the two



(FAR LEFT)
Evolve and *Ouroboros*
in Merete Rasmussen's
studio, May 2019

(LEFT)
Ceramic sketches in
the studio

Dual Form
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
47 x 75 x 116 cm



vibrant orange forms nestle together to create a complex horizontal piece of impressive scale. In contrast, *Fragments of Repeated Form* with its matt black finish and similar interest in growth to *Evolve*, sits as two completely distinct elements that seem to reach out to communicate with each other in endless conversation, changing subtly depending on the two parts arrangement.

This exhibition signals a new chapter in Rasmussen's work. The riot of colour and the complexity of form are instantly recognisable but there is a new sense of seriousness, of challenge and progression perhaps felt more fervently after a short break to think and regroup. Rasmussen's work is an ongoing and exciting transformation and whilst transformation may be part of human DNA there are only a few who can succeed in pushing it beyond its limits and to a higher level. In this age where many of us assume such transformation must require an element of digital assistance it is refreshing that this exhibition relishes purely the hand-made: transforming mud to majesty and wax to wonder.

POLLY BIELECKA

CATALOGUE

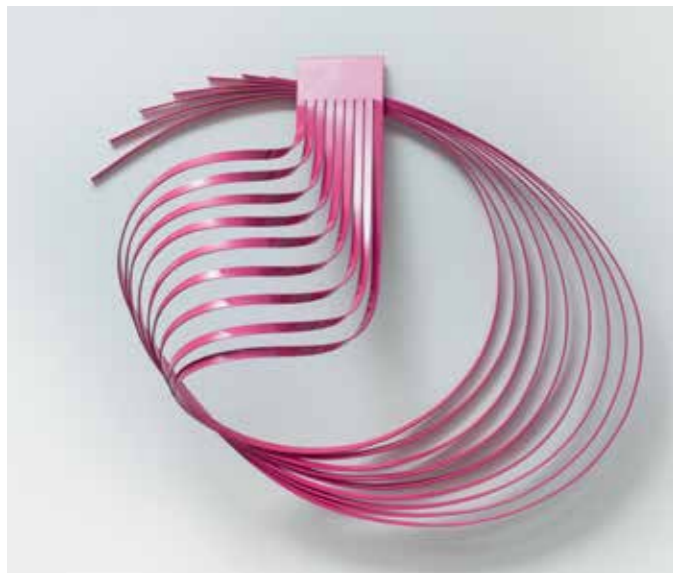


Evolve
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
87 x 76 x 78 cm

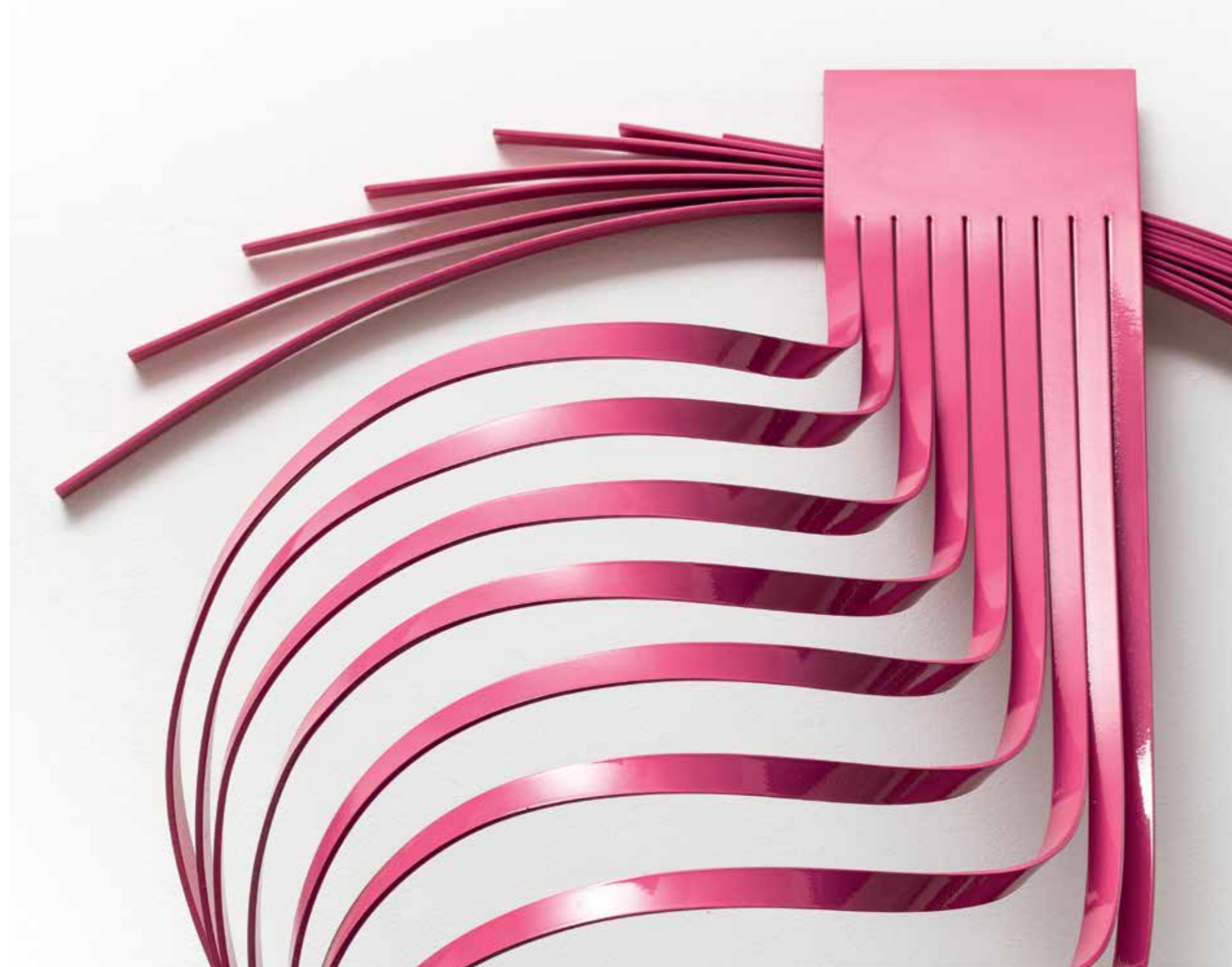


Blue Motion
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
70 x 50 x 60 cm

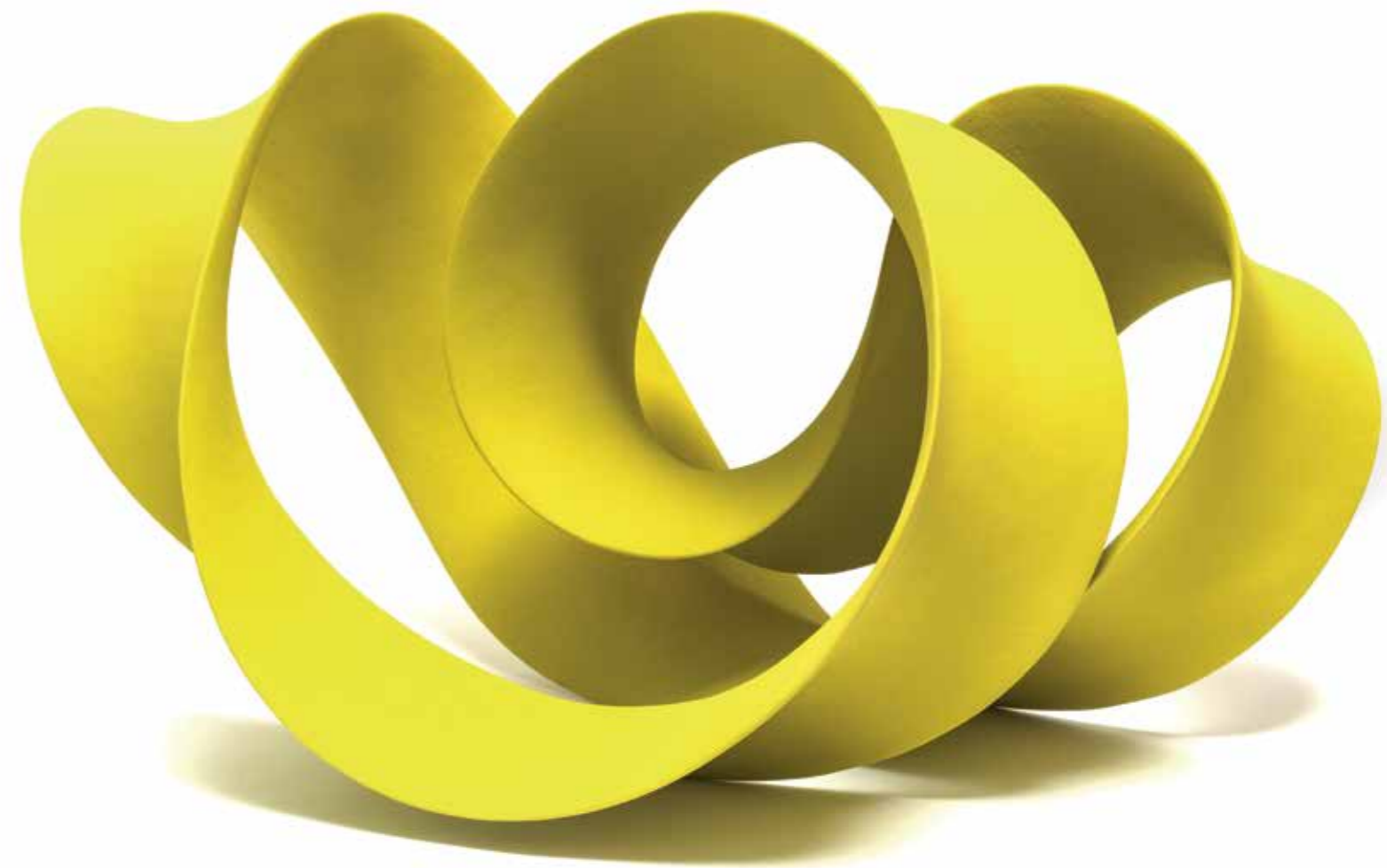




Multiple Form
2019, Painted copper
Unique
70 x 60 x 30 cm



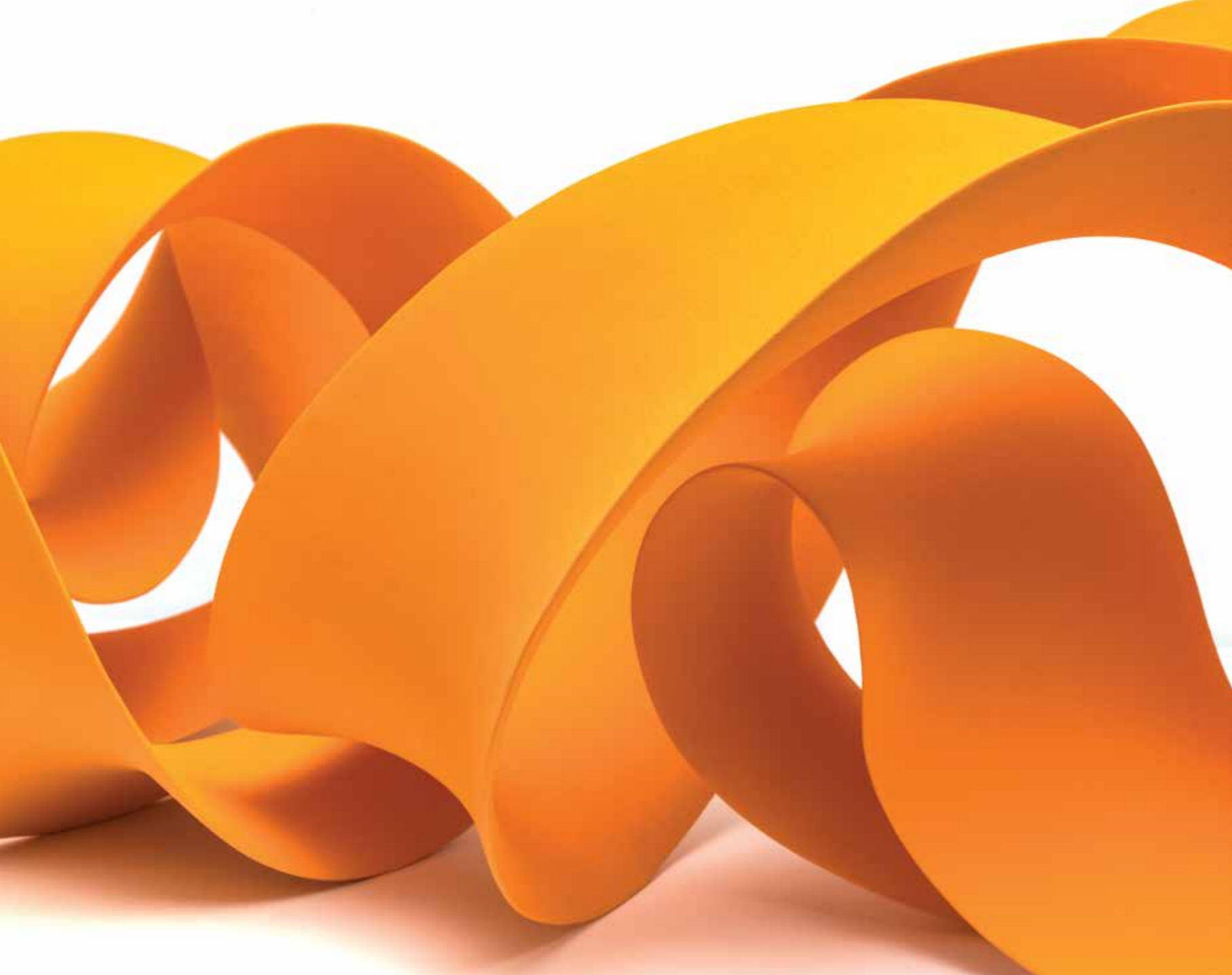
Momentum
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
65 x 58 x 42 cm





Oscillation
2019, Bronze
Unique
21 x 16 x 13 cm





Dual Form
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
47 x 75 x 116 cm





Infinite Red
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
70 x 55 x 30 cm

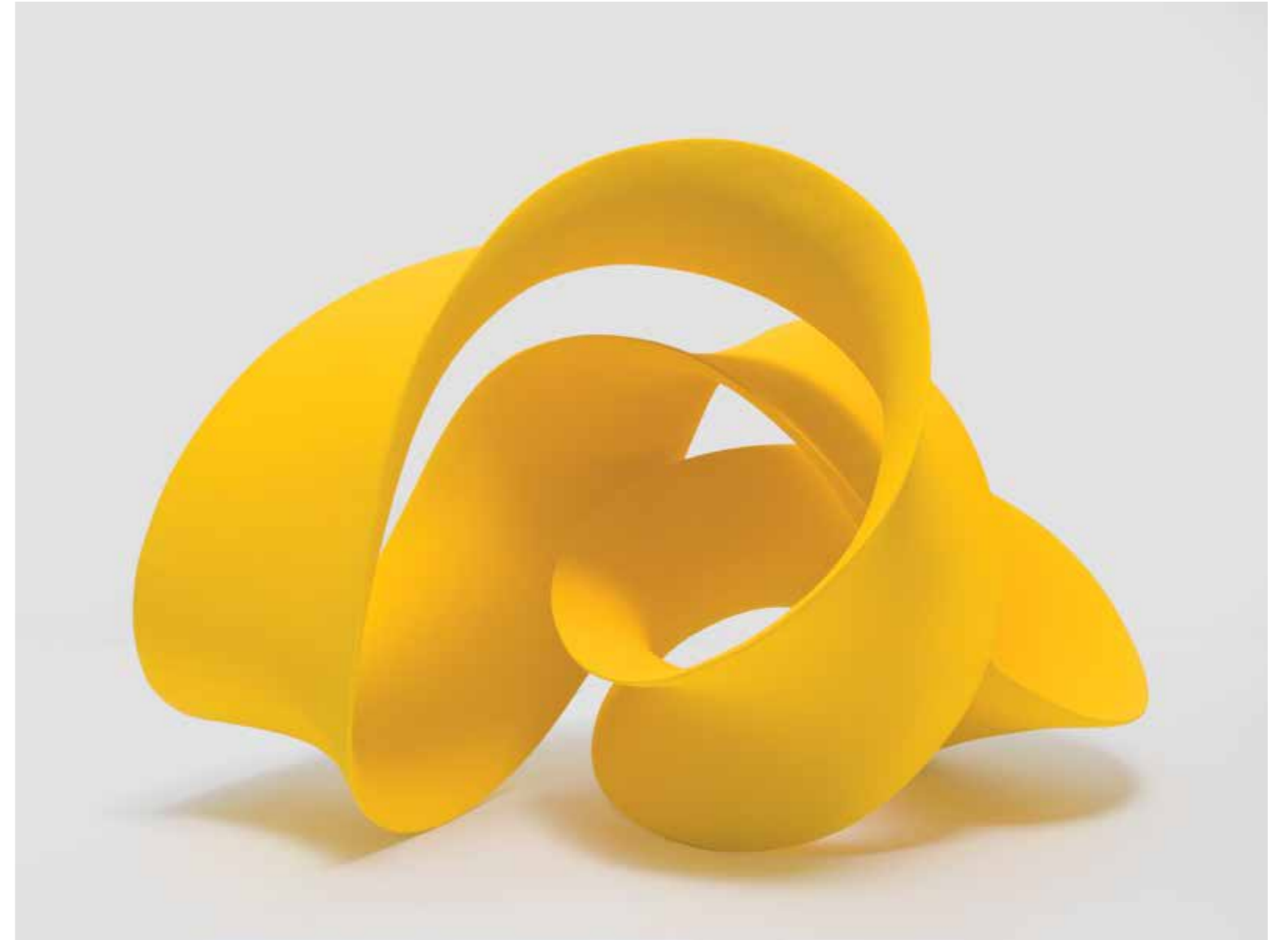


Blue Folded Form
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
60 x 60 x 30 cm





Entwined Yellow II
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
70 x 50 x 40 cm





Twisted Movement
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
36 x 60 x 30 cm



Impetus
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
60 x 40 x 37 cm





Tensity III
2019, Bronze
Unique
21.5 x 10.5 x 11 cm



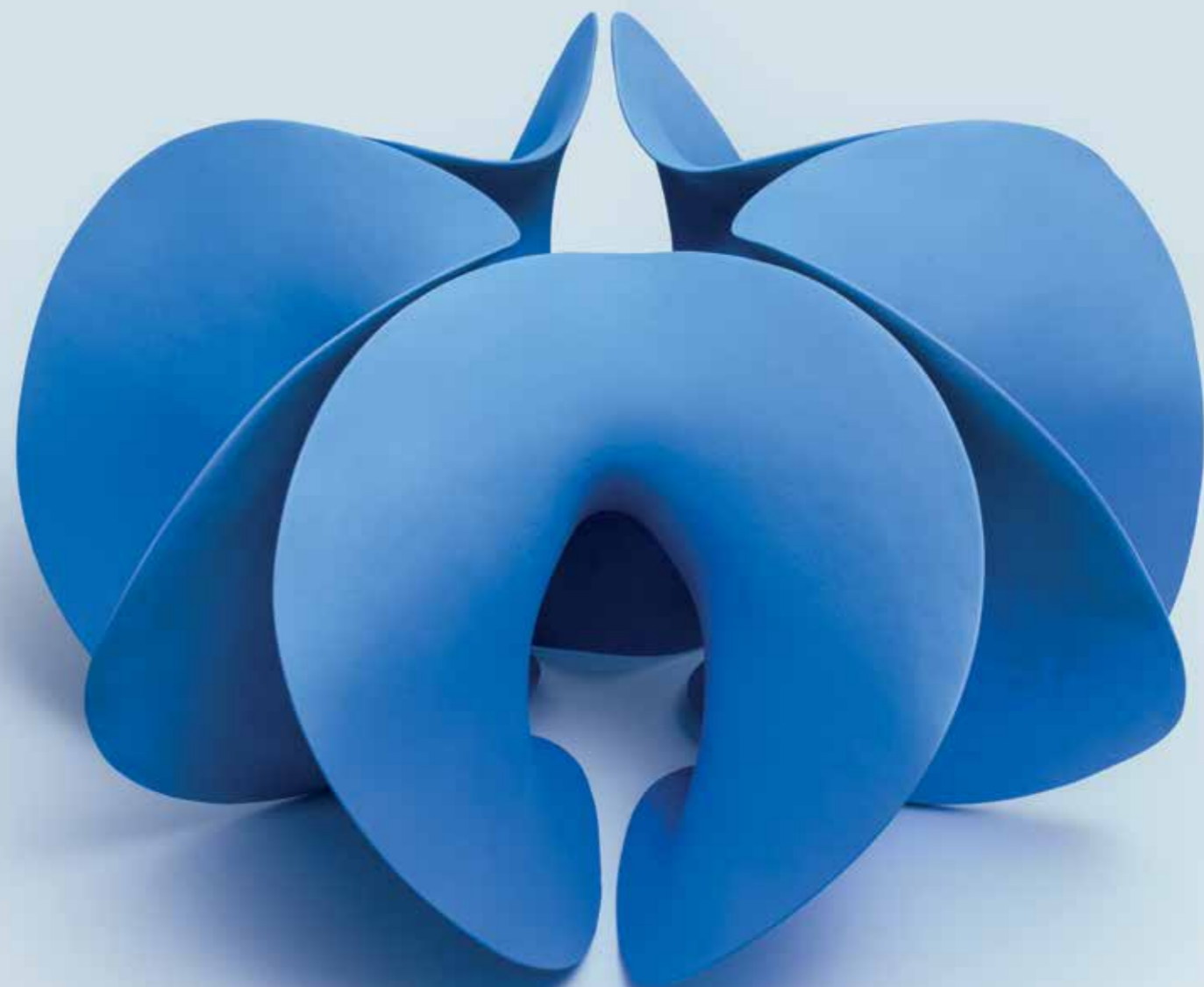


Fragments of Repeated Form
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
64 x 52 x 46 cm &
57 x 51 x 44 cm

Continuous Red II
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
41.5 x 60 x 56 cm



Enfolded Blue
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
45 x 82 x 80 cm





Tensity I
2019, Bronze
Unique
28 x 16 x 14 cm





*Choosing colours should not be a gamble. It should be a conscious decision.
Colours have a meaning and a function.*

VERNER PANTON

Circular Motion
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
32 x 20 x 20 cm



Balanced Form
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
45 x 50 x 34 cm

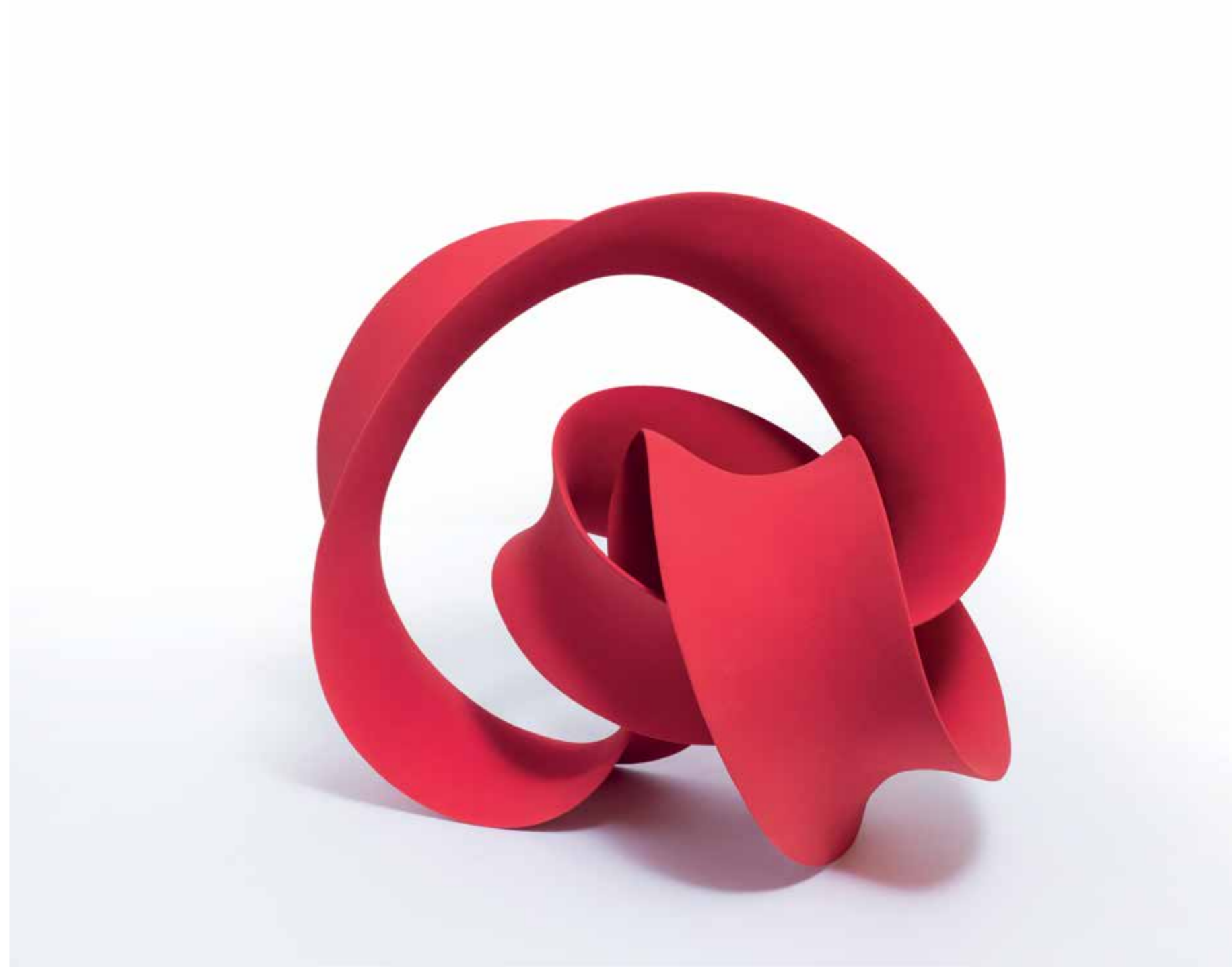




Tensity II
2019, Bronze
Unique
26 x 15 x 13.5 cm



Entwined Red
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
41 x 50 x 40 cm





Black Form
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
26 x 23 x 28 cm

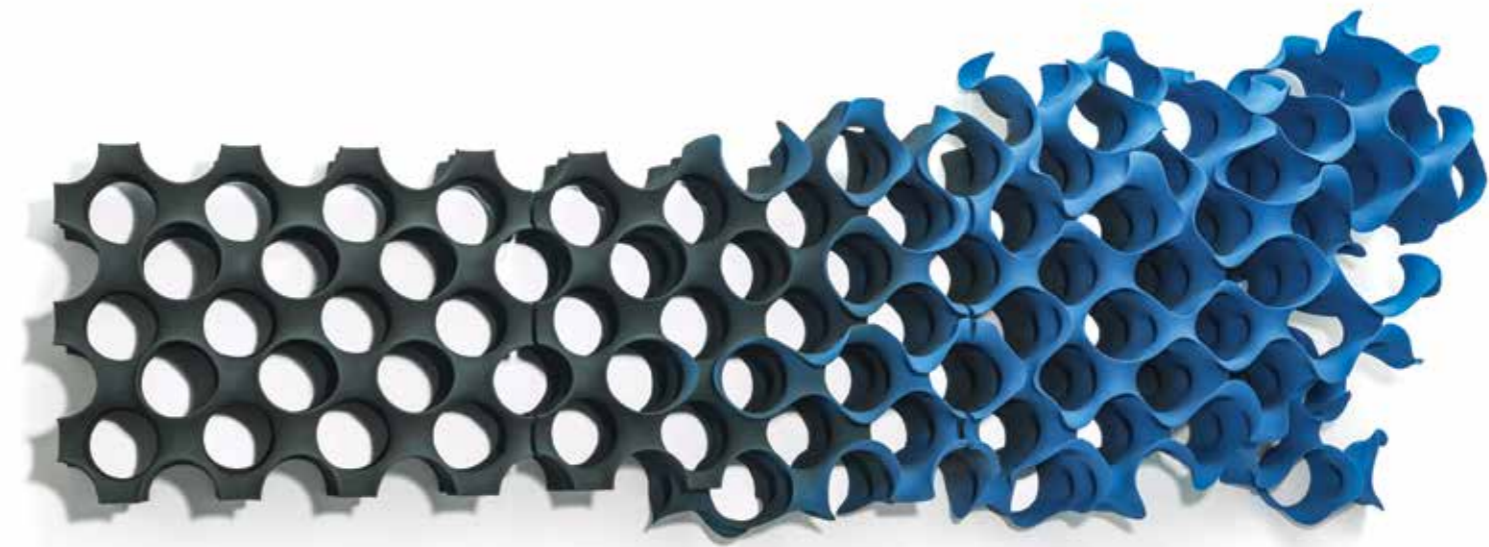
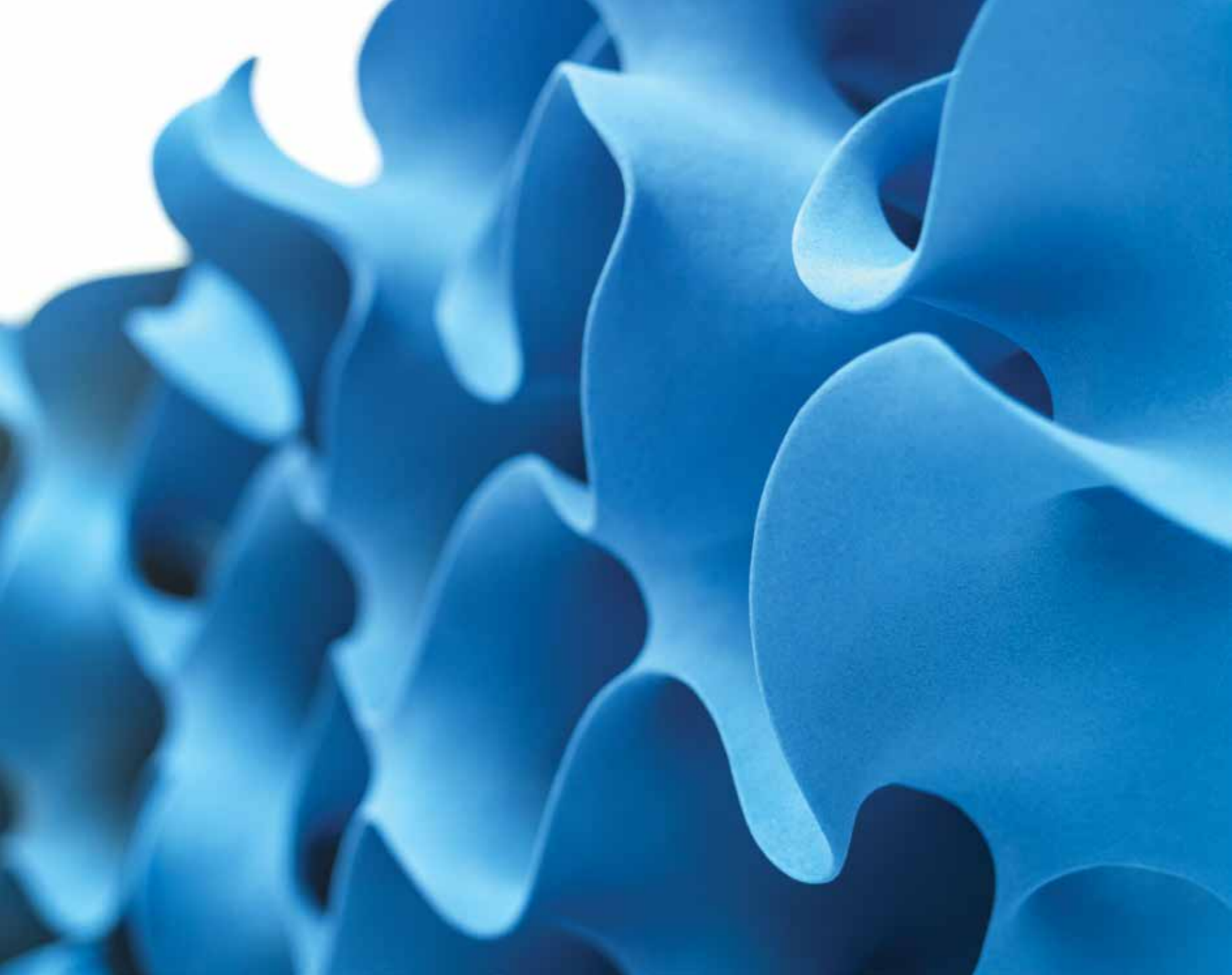
Orbit
2019, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
27 x 26 x 18 cm





Continuity
2019, Sterling Silver
Unique
12.5 x 7 x 5 cm





Morphogenesis
2015, Ceramic
with coloured slip
Unique
90 x 226 x 40 cm

MERETE RASMUSSEN

BIOGRAPHY

1974	Born in Copenhagen, Denmark
1974	Moves to Sweden with her family
1997-1999	Oestra Grevie Folkhoegskola, estetiska linjen - keramik, Sweden
2000-2005	Returns to Denmark to study Ceramics MA at Designskolen Kolding
2004	Glasgow School of Art, Student Exchange, Scotland
2004	TERRA, International Sculpture Symposium, Serbia and Montenegro
2005	Network, The International Ceramic Research Centre, Denmark
2005	Moves to Camberwell, London
2007	Awarded the Crafts Council Development Award
2008	Ceramic Symposium Tel Hai, Israel
2016	Moves to Sussex

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2019	Merete Rasmussen: New Work, Pangolin London
2016	J. Lohmann Gallery, New York
2015	Merete Rasmussen: Bronze and Ceramics, Pangolin London
2014	<i>Equilibre & Couleur</i> , Mouvements Modernes, Paris
2013	Merete Rasmussen, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh
2013	Sculptural Ceramics: Focus Artist, Sculptural Showcase, Pangolin London
2011	Sculpture in the Workspace, Public Art at Canary Wharf, London
2011	Merete Rasmussen, Bluecoat Display Centre, Liverpool
2010	Merete Rasmussen, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh
2009	15a Galerie & Beedentuin, Lochem, The Netherlands

GROUP EXHIBITIONS & FAIRS

2015-19	Masterpiece Art Fair, London represented by Pangolin London
2015-18	Collective Design Fair, represented by J. Lohmann Gallery, NY
2017	Himalayan Gardens exhibition, Yorkshire, curated by Pangolin London

2017	<i>Home from Home</i> , Contemporary Applied Arts, London
2016	Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London
2015	Future Heritage, Decorex International Design Fair, London
2014	<i>Sculptor's Jewellery</i> , Pangolin London
2014	The Salon, Art+Design Fair, represented by J. Lohmann Gallery, NY
2014	<i>Sculpture Showcase</i> , Pangolin London
2013	<i>Sculptural Ceramics</i> , Pangolin London
2013	Puls Gallery, Brussels
2013	Collect 2013 - represented by Sarah Myerscough Fine Arts, London
2012	SOFA New York 2012, represented by J. Lohmann Gallery, NY
2012	Collect 2012, The Saatchi Gallery, London - represented by CAA
2012	<i>With Love from Denmark</i> , Puls Gallery, Brussels
2011	British Ceramics Biennial 2011, AWARD exhibition, Stoke-on-Trent
2011	Collect 2011, The Saatchi Gallery, London - represented by The Scottish Gallery
2011	SOFA New York 2011, represented by CAA
2011	<i>Fables Contemporaines</i> , Mouvements Modernes/ Dutko Gallery, Paris
2010	Puls Gallery, Brussels
2010	Summer Pavilion, Gallery Lilly Zeligman, Laren, The Netherlands
2010	Collect 2010, Saatchi Gallery, London - represented by The Scottish Gallery
2010	SOFA New York 2010, represented by CAA
2010	Contemporary Ceramics, Galerie Besson, London
2010	<i>Focus</i> , CAA, Contemporary Applied Arts, London
2010	Ceramic Art London 2010, Royal College of Art, London
2009	Origin, London
2009	<i>Made it</i> , Contemporary Ceramics, London Design Festival
2009	Ceramic Art London, Royal College of Art, UK
2008	Mouvements Modernes Gallery at FIAC, Paris
2008	<i>Form and Texture</i> , Contemporary Ceramics, London
2008	Origin, London
2008	Danish Ceramics, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh
2008	<i>Paysages en Fusain</i> , Galerie Fusion, Toulouse, France
2007	<i>Sommerspiele</i> , craft2eu, Hamburg, Germany

2007 *Hoestsamling*, Galleri Pictor, Aengelholm, Sweden
2007 Showcase V&A Shop, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, UK
2007 Hannah Peschar Sculpture Garden, Ockley, UK
2007 Showcase, Contemporary Ceramics, London, UK
2007 Esperanto, Brick, Vienna, Austria
2007 Showcase, The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh, UK
2007 Showcase, Yorkshire Sculpture Park, UK
2007 *Keramik i Kolding*, Koldinghus, Kolding, Denmark
2007 Ceramic Art London 2007, London, UK
2006 Public Art at Canary Wharf, London, UK
2006 The Danish Museum for Arts and Crafts, Copenhagen, Denmark
2006 Ceramic Art London 2006, London, UK
2005 The International Ceramic Research Centre, Denmark
2005 Designer Zoo, Copenhagen, Denmark
2005 Contemporary Art Gallery, Kikinda, Serbia and Montenegro

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Victoria & Albert Museum, UK
Museum of Arts and Design, New York, USA
The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge
National Museum of Scotland, Edinburgh, UK
Crafts Council Collection, UK
York Art Gallery, UK
Aberdeen Art Gallery, UK
Oldham Gallery, Manchester, UK
Crafts Council Collection, UK
FNAC National Fund of Contemporary Arts, France
TERRA, International Sculpture Symposium, Serbia and Montenegro
Guldagergaard, The International Ceramic Research Centre, Denmark



Merete Rasmussen working
in her studio, 2015

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks go to Merete Rasmussen for all her hard work in producing this spectacular exhibition of new work. We would also like to thank Pangolin Editions for realising the bronzes and Steve Russell Studios for their photography.

Quote on page 43 taken from "Verner Panton: Notes on Colour". Danish Design Center; Copenhagen; 1991

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