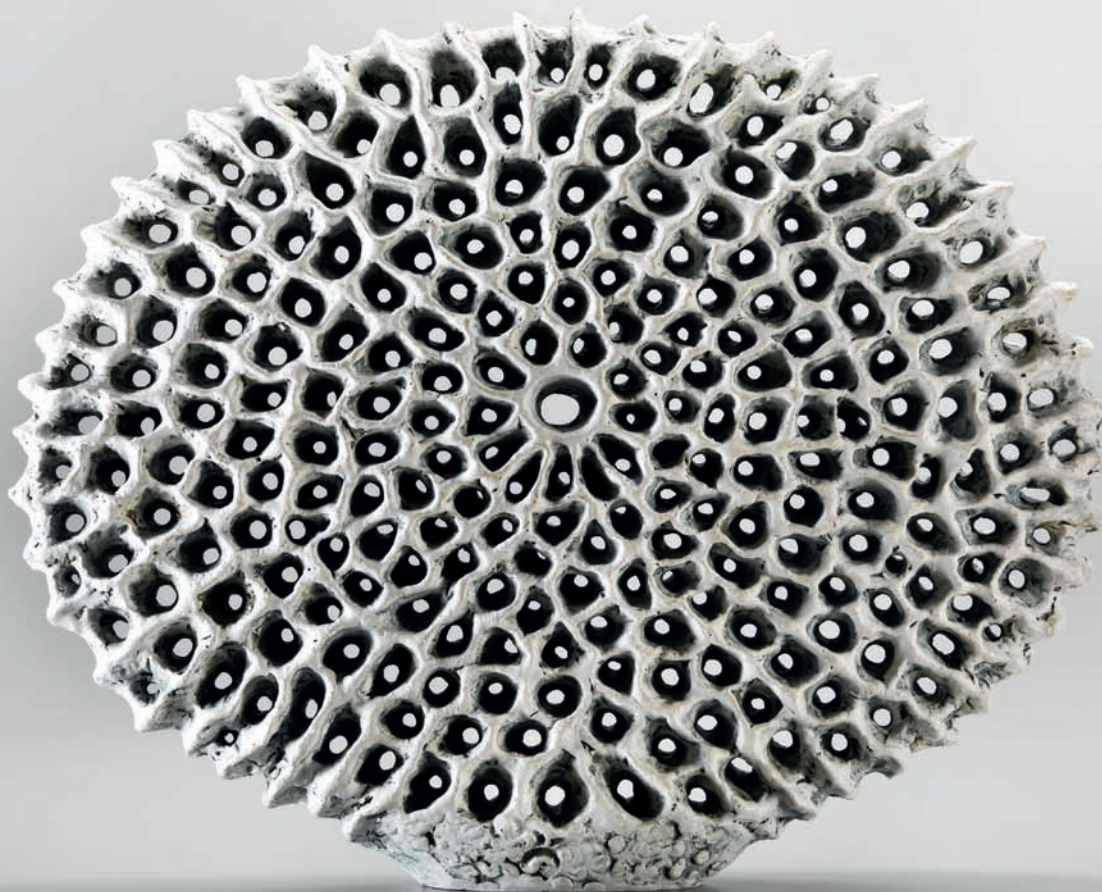




BARBRO ÅBERG



The Skeleton of Existence

Barbro Åberg's ceramic oeuvre

Over the last 35 years, internationally renowned Danish/Swedish ceramicist Barbro Åberg has been working meticulously on her own artistic explorations, whilst transforming the language of contemporary ceramics. This specific interplay between the personal and the collective characterizes her work. It manifests at meta-level in the way her unique approach, untouched by fashion trends, has steadily developed in a linear manner from her earliest attempts and into artistic maturity. Åberg had a personal, artistic vision, right from the beginning. This vision has manifested more and more clearly as an interest in the collective. Our collective memories, associations, remnants of dreams, archetypal symbols, a universal language of form and an almost cosmic biology characterizes her work, all through her artistic development.

Two main inspirations have impacted her work at a structural, material level: the introduction to adding perlite to clay in the beginning of the 1990s, which allowed more sculptural constructions, and later on the use of paper clay, which resulted in the graceful, airy structures that have become Barbro Åberg's hallmark. Since around 2006/2007 her work seems to have developed even further. Here we see

an interplay between the physical and the metaphysical, the transcendence of light and the density of matter, being and non-being, in sculptures that are at the same time breathtakingly fragile and powerfully present. Recollection and Recognition was the title of a major solo exhibition in 2011, which very precisely summarizes the essence of her work: it refers to a collective human pool of vague archaic, cosmic, organic memory, at the same time as it facilitates a recognition of the unknown: it wakes us up to what we know already, at a deeper level, just not present to our everyday awareness.

Barbro Åberg's work exists in a different realm. It exists somewhere beyond our everyday level of consciousness. We recognize at a structural, formal level the universal forms of wheel, bowl, sphere, ship, house etc., but we cannot place these objects anywhere within the known world. They invite us to expand our notion of the known reality: they take us into the form beyond the form. The skeleton of existence, so to say.

What is left is presence. If anything, this is what her work transmits most powerfully. The objects appear to breathe by themselves. They seem alive, yet unde-

Fossil Fantasy IV
2013
29x36x7 cm

fined by the mind. They are at the same time familiar and unknown. We are being taken into the realm of the undefined, the existential openness from where the known reality emerges: the form beyond form.

Knowing Barbro Åberg's humble attitude to her work, this interpretation might seem almost pretentious to her. "I am just doing my thing" as she puts it. But still, her work process speaks of a connection to this deeper pulse of existence. Ideas seem to emerge intuitively in the process, as she works and literally manipulates the clay. When she works, the creative process is completely open, as a dialogue between her unconscious mind and the object itself. She will be sensitive to the object and feel what is trying to emerge, and as she describes it, the object will speak back. It has its own life, its own character that her hands seek to manifest.

She is an enthusiastic photographer, and allows herself to see with the camera, unfiltered. Nature, science, structures, patterns are all part of her visual inspiration. Sometimes, while working with the clay, she will recognize flashes or structures from the vast amount of photos that she has taken over the years. The visual inspiration has been stored in the back of her mind, in order to reemerge when the moment is ripe.

Hence, Barbro Åberg's working process is character-

ized by an ability to work with a non-directive mind, allowing impulses from her deeper intuition to manifest. By creating from this existential openness, the sculptures come into life from this place beyond the known, manifest reality. They speak to us from a place afar and call us into presence, touched by the depth they provide. They remove us from our given time and space - the moment and the context - and bring us to places within ourselves that we rarely explore. The undefined, non-rational, the unknown. The silent space where we're simply human, experiencing the vastness of existence.

*Louise Mazanti,
Ph.D in contemporary craft*

Shield
2014
56x16x8 cm



Secret Tree
2014
52x65x10 cm





Double Organic Wheel
2011
56x56x11 cm

White Organic Vessel
2014
17x26x11 cm



"The forms call to mind images of scanning electron microscopy of Radiolarian micro-fossils. There is the sense that we might be observing a close-up of a cell structure or tiny cross-section of bone and then the view suddenly expands out to a geologic scale. We are taken from a place of intimacy to the sublime. Each piece enters into a dialogue with the viewer wherein its own narrative, regarding its origins and/or its reason for being, is unfolded."

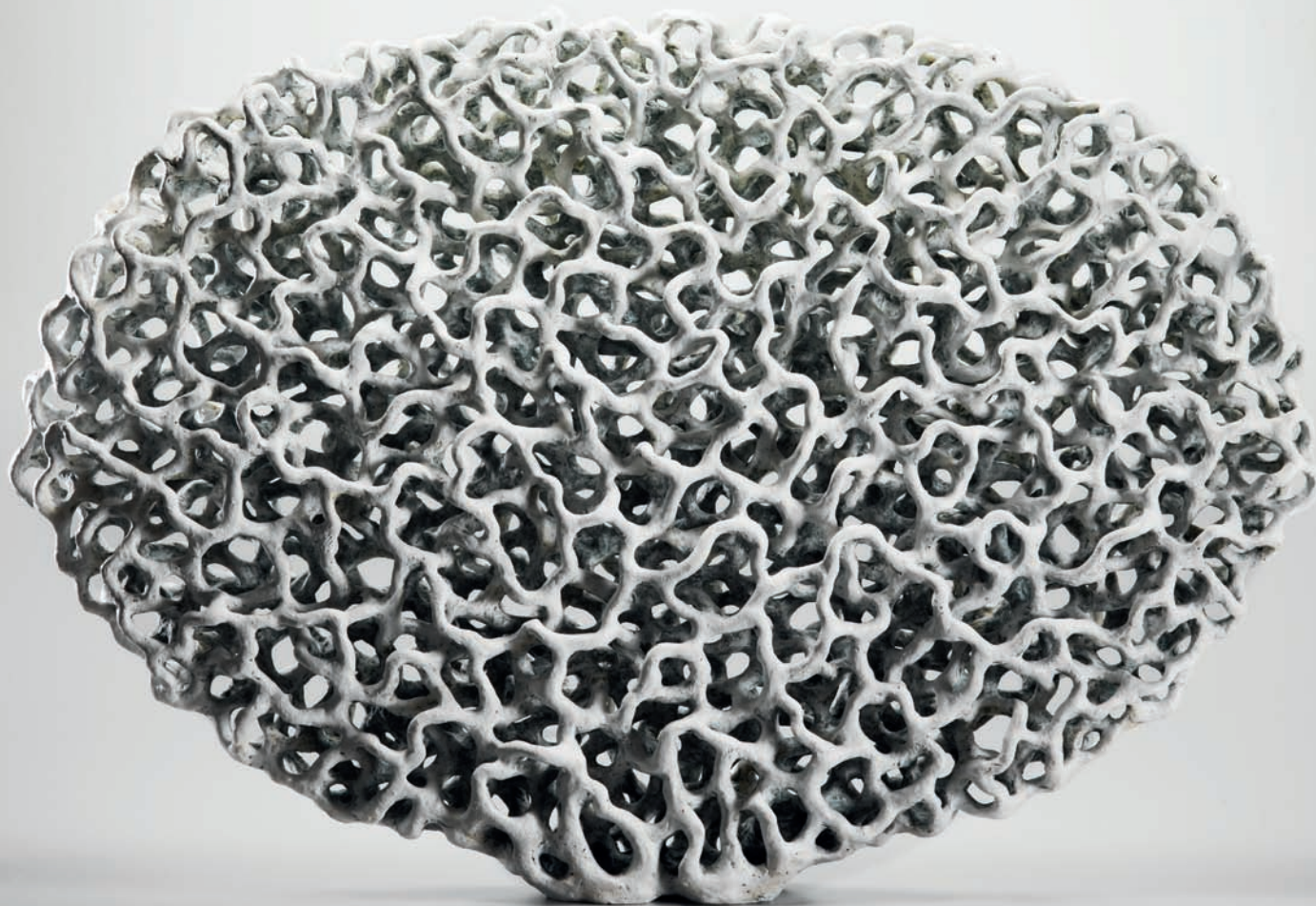
Trudy Golley, Ceramic artist and Head of Ceramics at Red Deer College, Canada

From the article Traces of Time, Ceramics Art and Perception Magazine

The Grip Ship
2011
41x58x30 cm



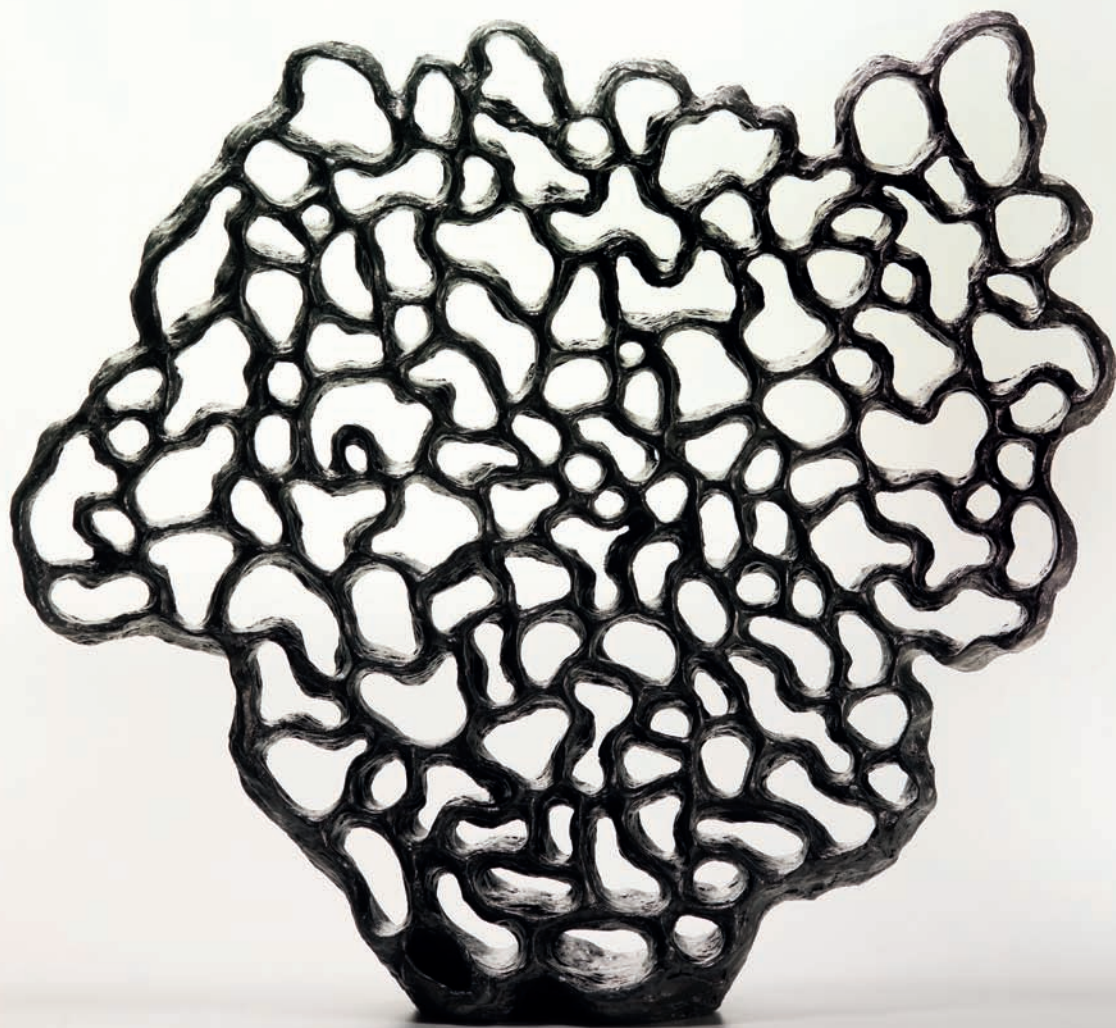
Murmuration
2013
64x50x10 cm





Black Double Wheel
2011
37x37x6 cm

Secrets
2011
54x59x11 cm



"Creating pieces on a human scale, Åberg has consistently built forms that connect to landscape, structures in nature, and scientific discovery. She has a strong sense of architectural integrity in all that she attempts like molecular diagrams or tracery of stained glass windows, which give solid ground to her work."

Wendy Tarlow Kaplan, Co-curator, From the Kilns of Denmark

Linear
2012
18x37x14 cm



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Member of IAC – International Academy of Ceramics

Vita

- 1958 Born in Umeå, Sweden.
- 1979-82 Art Education. Clackamas Community College, Oregon, USA.
- 1983 Assistant for potter Susan Steinman, Berkely, California, USA.
- 1984-85 Art School in Uppsala, Sweden.
- 1986-88 The School of Arts and Crafts in Kolding, Dk.
- 1990/92 *Clay Today*. Workshops at Hollufgård and Sønderborg, Dk.
- 1994 *Paper Clay*. Workshop with Rosette Gault, Dk.
- 2000 Sandcasting. Workshop with Kari Brovold-Hagen, Norway.
- 2002 Large Scale Ceramics. Workshop with Jim Robison, UK.
- 2007 Member of IAC- International Academy of Ceramics.
- 2012 Inclusion in Kraks Blå Bog (Krak's Blue Book), Dk.

Jurymember at Censored Exhibitions

Guest Artist at International Ceramic Center – Guldagergård, Dk.

Guest teacher and lecturer at:

The Designschool in Kolding, Dk

Konstfack, Sweden.

Aarhus Art Academy, Dk.

American River College, USA.

Keramisch centrum, Netherlands.

International Ceramic Center, Guldagergård, Dk.

ICAF – International Ceramic Art Festival, Sasama, Japan.

International Ceramic Center – Guldagergård, Dk.

Public Collections

Musée de Carouge, Switzerland.

GIFU – Museum of Modern Ceramic Art, Japan.

The New Carlsberg Foundation, Dk.

Danish Arts Foundation, Dk.

Museum of International Ceramic Art - Grimmerhus, Dk.

The Danish Museum of Art and Design, Copenhagen, Dk.

The National Public Art Council, Sweden.

International Ceramic Center - Guldagergård, Dk.

Aarhus City Council, Dk.

Ry City Council, Dk.

Selected Juried exhibitions

- 2004 La Biennale de la Sculpture en Céramique, Mamer, Luxembourg.
- 1993 Artists Easter Exhibition in Aarhus, Dk.
- 1993 Fletcher Challenge Ceramics Award. New Zealand.
- 1991 Charlottenborgs Spring Exhibition, Copenhagen, Dk.
- 1990 Artists Easter Exhibition in Aarhus, Dk.
- 1989 Artists Easter Exhibition in Aarhus, Dk.
- 1988 Artists Summer Exhibition in Tistrup, Dk.

Selected solo exhibitions

- 2014 *Correlations*, Galleri Lerverk, Gothenburg, Sweden.
- 2013 Galerie Tiramisu, Carouge, Switzerland, *Biennale Parcours Céramique Carougeois*, 2013.
- 2011-2012 *Recollection and Recognition*, International Museum of Ceramic Art- Dk.
- 2010 Galleri Jytte Møller, Dk.
- 2010 Galerie Hélène Porée, Paris, France.
- 2008 Keramisch Centrum Nederlands, Haarlem, Holland.
- 2008 Galleri Grønlund, Copenhagen, Dk.
- 2007 Galleri Jytte Møller, Fredericia, Dk.
- 2005 *Thoughts about Time*, Galleri Nørby, Copenhagen, Dk.
- 2004 Galleri Jytte Møller, Fredericia, Dk.
- 2003 *Traces of Time*, Galleri Blås&Knåda, Stockholm, Sweden.
- 2001 Galleri Nørby, Copenhagen, Dk.

Selected two-person shows

- 2012 Danish Clay: Barbro Åberg and Hans Vangso.
Lacoste Gallery, Concord, USA.
- 2006 Barbro Åberg and Jonathan Keep. PULS, Bruxelles, Belgium.
- 2005 Barbro Åberg and Thiébaud Chagué, Carlin Gallery, Paris, France.
- 2003 Barbro Åberg and Lis Wuisman Galleri Pagter, Kolding, Dk.
- 1998 Anne Vilsbøl and Barbro Åberg, Thisted Museum, Dk.

Selected group exhibitions

- 2014 *Lyst*, Galleri R2, Bornholm, Dk.
In connection with European Ceramic Context 2014.
- 2013 *Masterpieces - Miniature*, Ann Linnemann Studie Galleri, Copenhagen, Dk.
- 2012 *Drawing the Empty Space*, The XXIIInd Internationale Biennale of Vallauris, France.
- 2012 Gallery Hu, Nagoya, Japan.
GIFU – Museum of Ceramic Art, Japan.
- 2011 Verkehr Museum, Japan.
Sasama International Ceramic Festival, Japan.
- 2008 *The View from Denmark* - Contemporary Danish Ceramics, Lacoste Gallery, USA.
- 2007 *Mathematical Ceramics*. St. Joseph Gallery, Leuwarden, Holland.
The Works Gallery, Philadelphia, USA.
- 2007 *Keramik i Kolding* – Keramik afdeling 1968 - 2007, Designskolen Kolding, Dk.
- 2005 *Meister der Moderne*, Handwerkskammer of München, Germany.
- 2004 *Céramiques Contemporaines Danoises*, Carlin Gallery, Paris, France.
From the Kilns of Denmark, Maison du Danemark, Paris & Fælleshuset, Berlin.
Keramik aus Dänemark, Galerie Hilde Holstein, Bremen, Germany.
- 2003 *From the Kilns of Denmark*, Fitchburg Art Museum, Mingie Art Museum, Crocker Art Museum, Racine Art Museum, USA.
Interludium, Dronninglund Art Center, Dk.
- 2001 *Sculptural Form and Image*, Grimmerhus. Dk.
Metamorphose, International Biennial, Kapfenberg, Austria.
- 2000 *Standpunkte*, International Ceramic Museum Grimmerhus, Dk.
Material:Earth - Size: Small, Kunstforum Kirchberg, Switzerland.
- 1999 *Standpunkte*, Keramion in Frechen, Germany.
- 1997 The Ceramic Triannual Exhibition, Trapholt, Dk.
Danish Ceramics, 1850-1997, Sophienholm, Dk.
- 1996 UNIKA, Danish Museum of Decorative Art, Copenhagen, Dk.
- 1995 *Nordic Ceramics*, Galleri Nørby, Denmark, Galleri Lejonet, Sweden.
Fyns Museum of Art, Odense, Dk.

SOFA & COLLECT

- 2012 SOFA New York 2012 - represented by Lacoste Gallery.
- 2011 SOFA New York - represented by Lacoste Gallery.
- 2010 SOFA Chicago - represented by Lacoste Gallery.
- 2009 SOFA Chicago - represented by Lacoste Gallery.
- 2009 SOFA New York - represented by Lacoste Gallery.
- 2008 SOFA New York - represented by Lacoste Gallery.
- 2007 SOFA Chicago - represented by Snyderman - The Works Gallery.
- 2006 SOFA Chicago - represented by Galleri Nørby.
- 2014 Collect, London - represented by Cultural Connections CC, UK.

A selection of Grants and Awards

- The Committee for Crafts and Design Project Funding: Collect London 2014.
- Prix du Public, Le 13e Parcours Céramique Carougeois in Switzerland., 2013.
- The Danish Art Foundation 1993, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2013.
- Danmarks Nationalbanks Jubilæumsfond af 1968.
- Esther og Jep Finks Mindefond for Arkitecture and Crafts.
- Danish Crafts.
- Ellen og Knud Dalhoff Larsens Fond.
- Augustinusfonden.
- Grosserer L.F. Foghts Fond.
- Koefoeds Legat.
- Anna E. Munchs Legat.
- Frimodt-Heineke Fonden.
- Politikensfondet.
- Højesteretssagfører Davids legat for slægt og venner.
- Letterstedtska Föreningen.
- Knud Højgaards Fond.

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