

European Ceramic Art Schools Project 2018-2020

Project description



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For 2 years, 24 students of all nationalities from 4 European art schools will explore clay and ceramics as the foundations and the cements of creativity and cultural openness. Through 3 Creative and Research Workshops in 2019 and 2020, the youngsters will delve into the traditions, the cultures and the history of ceramics in France, Romania and Germany, with the support of ceramic professionals and their 4 art teachers. Intercultural cooperation, cross-professional exchanges and collective reflection will be the key means of achieving excellence in ceramics and promoting mutual understanding and our shared heritage.

The *European Ceramic Art Schools Project 2018-2020* is coordinated and supported by:

Project leader



Project genesis

In 2017-2018, 3 teachers from 3 European art schools (ENSAD de Nancy and TALM Le Mans, in France, and Muthesius Kunsthochschule in Kiel, Germany) shared the same goal: to get together with their students and push them to elaborate and produce large-scale ceramic artworks, specifically imagined to be exhibited outside. Those teachers gave rise to the first academic workshop called *Facing the Sky* that took place in April 2017 in Rairies Montrieux, a renowned brick factory based in Maine-et-Loire in France. The location is today well-known as one of the oldest production sites for terracotta in Europe. The company promotes tradition, local raw materials and high innovation for the best quality of clay bricks, tiles and tomettes. In the context of that 5 day workshop, the company provided a dozen international students with tons of raw clays, wet bricks, equipment and know-how to experiment ceramics and create artworks. On this basis, the trainees had to measure many factors such as material and spatial constraints, numerous types of bricks, colours and shapes issues. To complete the ongoing assessment, 11 artworks were produced, then exhibited in June 2018 at Domaine de Kerguéhennec, a French art center in Morbihan region.



Facing the sky, creative workshop in April 2017: international students producing their artworks in Rairies Montrieux

Facing the sky, temporary exhibition in June 2018 in Domaine de Kerguéhennec.

Top right: *Un mur qui danse*, by Tereza Burianova

Middle lower: *47°52'51"N 2°44'01" W474m*, by Noria Kouadji, Loïc Pasteur, Zoé Raymond

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2018-2020: a new partnership

Based on that previous workshop, the *European Ceramic Art Schools Project 2018-2020* springs from the drive and the collaboration of 4 ceramic artists and teachers pursuing a European-oriented career:

- **Clémence Van Lunen**, teacher at Ecole nationale supérieure d'art et de design de Nancy, France
- **Kerstin Abraham**, teacher at Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel, Germany
- **Marius Silviu Georgescu**, teacher at Universitatea de Arta si Design din Cluj-Napoca, Romania
- **Natsuko Uchino**, teacher at Ecole supérieure des beaux-arts - Site du Mans, France

At their first meetings in 2018, all of them observed that they shared the same ambition to collaborate for more cross-cultural education and pro-European teamwork to prepare their students to new professional realities, particularly driven by the fresh revival of interest for ceramics in the world of art in Europe. Ceramic is genuinely an interesting academic medium since it combines sculptural, plastic, iconographic, scenographic and experimental potentials. Moreover, it strongly conveys the history of Europe: it appeared in the Paleolithic period as the first processed material and first artistic medium of the continent. Thereafter, it was considerably used as an industrial material during the industrial revolution to shape the modernity of Europe. It is thus a source of creativity, inspiration and European awareness.

Starting from these observations, they decided to pool their respective strengths to build a European project with private organisations and production sites (museums, factories, quarries...) willing to welcome 24 international students on site to share their professional expertise and their stories. All together, they can answer the question of ceramics as an omnipresent medium in the fields of art, culture, society, architecture and industry in Europe.

Academic partners



Ecole Nationale supérieure d'art et de design de Nancy - FRANCE
<http://www.ensa-nancy.fr>



Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel GERMANY
<https://muthesius-kunsthochschule.de>



Universitatea de Arta si Design din Cluj-Napoca - ROMANIA
<http://www.uad.ro>



ESBA TALM Ecole supérieure des beaux-arts du Mans - FRANCE
<http://lemans.esba-talm.fr>

Operational partners



Vent des Forêts Contemporary art center
in rural area, Lorraine region - FRANCE
<http://ventdesforets.com>



Ofen-Keramik Museum & Hedwig Bollhagen Museum, Velten - GERMANY
<http://okmhb.de>



Rairies Montrieux brick manufacturer
Les Montrieux - Maine-et-Loire - FRANCE
<https://www.rairies.com>



Faimar ceramic tableware manufacturer
Baia Mare - Maramureş - ROMANIA
<http://www.faimar.ro>



CESIRO ceramic tableware factory
Sighişoara - Transylvania - ROMANIA
<http://www.cesiro.com>

European Ceramic Art Schools Project 2018-2020 : Overall Project

For this project, 24 students of all nationalities from the 4 participating art schools will spend two years exploring clay and ceramics as the foundations and the cements of creativity and cultural openness. 4 referring teachers and the operational partners will support the youngsters to take part in 3 Research and Creative Workshops (RCW), which will be held in ceramic production areas in France, Romania and Germany.

Through those RCW, ceramic professionals and the teachers will mentor the trainees to study the traditions, the cultures and the history attached to ceramics of the 3 countries. The historical and cultural backgrounds will be put into comparison with today's ceramic production, under industrial or handmade modes. They will also delve into many specific environments (deep countryside, post-industrial places, developing areas...) to comprehend the links between past and present, to discover a given territory and its sociocultural dimensions. Every RCW will stimulate the flow of ideas, cross-cultural exchanges and technical learning. It will give an overview of how ceramic has been produced and used over the centuries and what can be done today. For the students, this will be crucial to nurture their own inspiration and to find their personal way to shape this material.

Creative sessions will be organised to confront the students to ceramics in all its guises, to approach, perform and deflect it until they can propose a personal form of expression. Every piece of work will reveal a part of the intercultural project they would experience all together as a team. At the end of the project in June 2020, all the pieces of works of the students will be put together an exhibition, as the symbols of the cultural bridges they would have built together along the project.

All the partners of the *European Ceramics Workshop Project 2018-2020* are eager to support the students to live a unique cultural experience, to enrich the way they look at the world and the way they create.

Schedule summary: the 3 Research and Creative Workshops (RCW)

To join this 2 year adventure, 24 students will be invited by Pascal Yonet, the artistic director of Vent des Forêts. He will monitor the projects of the students to install their ceramic artworks in June 2020 for a permanent exhibition in the heart of Lahaymeix. The first artworks will be produced in April 2019 during a 5-days creative workshop at Rairies Montrieux brick factory (**1st RCW**). The students will benefit from specific know-how, raw materials and places for free from the company to create artworks, as close as possible to real professional contexts. In October 2019, the students will then participate in a 7-day 'ceramic origins and design workshop' (**2nd RCW**) to discover the tradition and the today's economy of ceramic tableware in that country. They will also produce a set of artistic plates in a ceramic factory for the exhibition in June 2020. In April 2020, they will carry out a 5-day raising-awareness workshop in Velten (**3rd RCW**), the post-industrial city knows as the "oven-town" of the past modern Europe. Lastly, they will end in Berlin to visit the capital, as the showcase of ceramic consumption made in Velten.

Learning objectives

To carry academic excellence and cross-cultural cooperation further, the *European Ceramic Art Schools Project 2018-2020* will value the competencies of every partner and the convergence of different aesthetics cultures and educational practices. In developing pedagogical synergies between all the partners, the project will also implement actions in lines with education and youth strategies for Europe, such as youth mobility, traineeship, mutual understanding...

By experimenting and learning ceramics, the partnership intends to:

- **Achieve excellence in ceramics** by offering the students high-quality facilities and pedagogical contents to stimulate inspiration and creativity: professional material, excursions in diverse sites and places, unexplored fields of research... The team of teachers and professionals will confront the students to practical and real condition issues, while bringing support and advices to them.
- **Foster cross-cultural cooperation**, by enabling youth mobility and intercultural exchanges. The new triangle partnership between France, Romania and Germany will encourage each beneficiary to discover new fronts of ceramic arts, production modes and learning cultures. Every workshop will offer immersive experiences to nurture a collective reflection process and pro-European teamwork.
- **Promote mutual understanding**. To analyse ceramic art and production in Europe, the students will delve into the historical, artistic and sociocultural dimensions of every place they will visit. Together, they will share different points of view to comprehend the discrepancies and analogisms between their cultures. Ceramic is thus the story line to bear witness to Europe's heritage and shared history.
- **Deepen pedagogical innovation**, by developing a broad range of learning tools: professionally-oriented course, peer-to-peer learning, cross-professional exchanges, research in history and onsite... The students will immerse themselves into new learning contexts, as close as possible to real professional contexts. Practical and theoretical research will be both emphasized to achieve thorough understanding of ceramics.



Facing the sky, creative workshop in April 2017
The two teachers Kerstin Abraham and Clémence Van Lunen, one student and the director of Rairies Montrieux

© Rairies Montrieux



23 students from Germany, France and Romania and Vent des Forêts team, all gathered together for the preliminary meeting in October 2018

© Vent des Forêts

Preliminary meeting in October 2018 at Vent des Forêts

Lahaymeix is a village of 80 inhabitants and a remote place out of time, in the countryside of Lorraine region, in France. Agriculture and hunting are the main economic activities in this territory. Lahaymeix, which means "little hedged gardens" in the ancient Lorraine dialect, is renowned for its open landscape design and for being a place where everyone feels at home. It is a partner of Vent des Forêts, a contemporary art center in the middle of the forests, where professional artists have been invited to produce artworks in-situ with the local enterprises and people since 1997. Twenty artworks are today visible on the lands of this village.

From the 15th to the 17th October 2018, Vent des Forêts invited 23 students and the 4 referring teachers from the 4 European art schools to take part in the first meeting in Lahaymeix. The aims of that preparatory stage was to meet with all together for the first time, to discover the village and to discuss the project.

During those 3 days and beyond, the 23 students have been working on perceiving the landscape of the village in various aspects and on capturing the rural environment, the architectural heritage, the cultural codes... How can the future artworks of the students be spatially and sensitively integrated in the village? This stage has been essential to document and research in that place of artistic matters, to nurture the artistic involvement and the creative process. From now to February 2019, the students are working on conceiving the artworks they will create in Rairies Montrieux. The pieces of work they will produce in France, Romania and Germany will be shown at the final exhibition in Lahaymeix in June 2020.



3-days preliminary meeting in October 2018 at Vent des Forêts and Lahaymeix to meet with all together for the first time.

© Vent des Forêts

1st RCW - 22-27th April 2019: Creative residency at Rairies Montrieux in France

OFAJ/DFJW Project leader: Vent des Forêts

For that first RCW, the students and the teachers will take possession of Rairies Montrieux brick factory to produce 15 to 20 artworks made of wet bricks and raw clay. They will firstly conceive the artworks from October 2018 to February 2019, with the support of their teachers and Vent des Forêts. The cooperation between the manufacturing company and the schools will be crucial to foster peer-learning and interculturality. They will also operate under the same conditions as professional artists in residency to enhance field experience and extend professional knowledge.

Rairies Montrieux will provide the trainees with tons of raw clays, wet bricks, tools and equipment. They will also be advised by the staff of the company, who is already accustomed to that academic experience.

Experimentation is at the core of the creative process. Five original shapes of honeycombed bricks with high plastic potentials are suggested to the students. However, the brick is a new material to get to grips with in a very short time, though it gives rise to new creative opportunities to make the most of it. Curiosity, perceptiveness and speed of execution are key competencies to successfully achieve that exercise.

The 5 traditional honeycombed bricks of Rairies Montrieux:



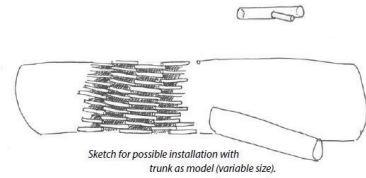
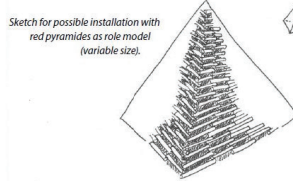
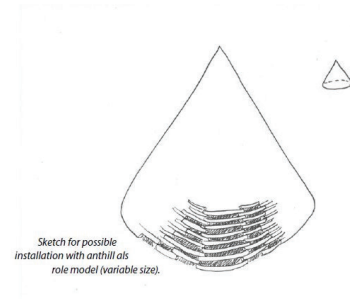
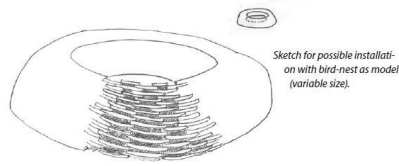
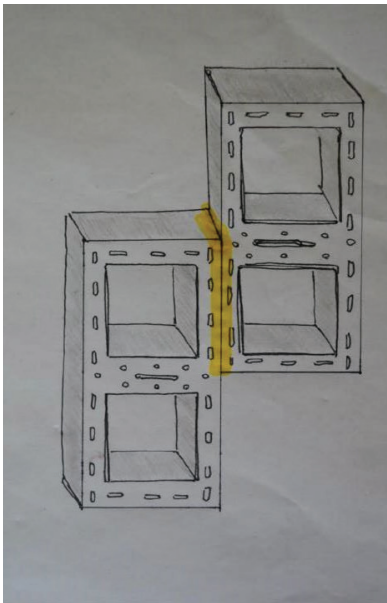
37x26x3,5 cm weight: 3,6 kg 28x33,5x 12 cm weight: 7 kg 33x16,5x5 cm weight: 1,8 kg 33x16,5x5 cm weight: 1,8 kg 37x26x3,5 cm weight: 3,6 kg

The artworks will be left to dry 6 to 9 months in the cool storage places on site. They will be later fired in the wood-burning kilns by the staff of the brick factory, then transported by semi-trailer to Lahaymeix by June 2020.

During this 5-days stay, the students and the teachers will be accommodated in 'Camping Les Portes de l'Anjou', at 5 km to Rairies Montrieux, and they will commute by minibus.

Learning objectives:

- Delve into on-site working conditions and cross-professional collaboration
- Build personal and collective projects, in a spirit of intercultural exchanges and youth teamwork
- Converge different cultures as well as aesthetics, learning and teaching methods
- Comprehend the entire production process of the brick factory
- Work on large-scale sculptures by taking into account technical, time and spatial constraints
- Develop a long-time research approach and its own artistic reflection, based on projection over time
- Document research and the ongoing production of artworks

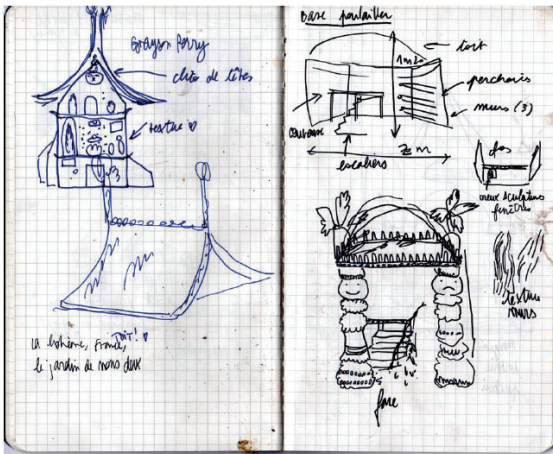


Examples of preliminary drawings and artistic research of students for *Facing the sky*, 2017 © Joris Valenzuela © Doro Brübach



Students in Rairies Montrieux, from the clay quarries to the brick factory's premises © Joris Valenzuela © Domaine de Kerguéhennec

Some projects proposals for the 2018-2020 edition



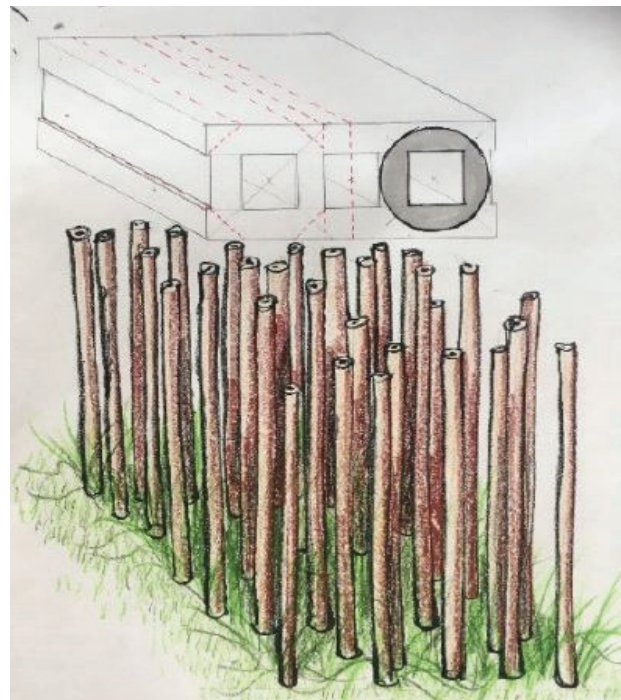
Sketches for Marie Tralci's project © Marie Tralci



Model of the project *Chicken Paradise* by Marie Tralci, student at ENSAD Nancy © Marie Tralci



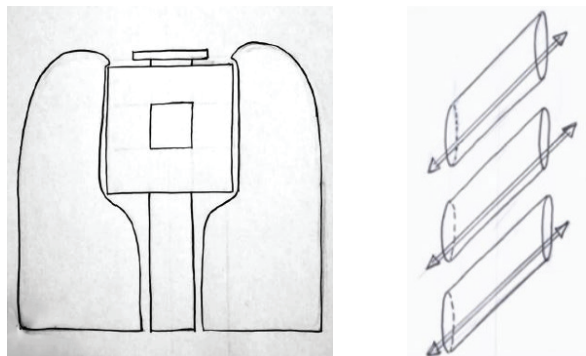
Model of Maëlle Helias' project, student at ENSAD © MH



Sketches for Tom Voß's project, student at Muthesius Kunsthochschule Kiel, Germany © Tom Voß



Model and sketches for Teodora-Adriana & Silvia Nicoleta's collective project, students at UAD Cluj-Napoca, Romania © BTA & GSN



2nd RCW - 12-19th October 2019: Ceramics origins and design workshop in Romania

OFAJ/DFJW Project leader : Vent des Forêts

Ceramic is a century-old tradition of Romanian culture. Since ancient times, the Romanians have been able to create colourful ceramic tableware, which has been recognized as real works of art for hundred years. Tradition now coexists with new methods and techniques to produce ceramics objects for the local and worldwide markets. This RCW will focus on discovering various aspects of ceramic productions, from the traditional to the modern ones, to visit two industrial factories and historical areas of ceramics in Europe.

Encourage a wide understanding of the Romanian history, culture and artistic backgrounds

Visits at the Maramureş Ethnographic Museum and at the Sighet village Museum will be held to provide the students with historical and cultural keys of the country. The youngsters will also be sensitized to Romanian art forms at the Bistriţa-Năsăud Art Museum and at the Comparative Art Museum of Sângeorz-Băi. They will later attend the great 2019 Cluj International Ceramics Biennale organised by the Universitatea de Artă și Design din Cluj-Napoca.

Back to the origins of ceramics... in the Maramureş county and at Sighișoara

In the village of Săcel in the Maramureş county, the students will discover Dacian pottery, which is a traditional unglazed and red ceramic. The today's techniques of Dacian pottery date back to the 'La Tène' culture from the European Iron Age period circa 450 BC. In the area of Săcel, the greasy clay is extracted from large quarries, at 12 to 15 meters depth. This village also presents a 500 years old kiln, which is unique in Romania. Following the discovery of Săcel, the international group will go to the medieval town Sighișoara to explore another type of ancient pottery related to Magyar traditions.

Discover industrial factories and produce artistic ceramic works

The students will be invited in two ceramic factories to carry out comparative studies on ceramic production. CESIRO is based in Sighișoara. It is the highest output tableware manufacturer in Europe and is one of the IKEA's main ceramic suppliers. The students will visit this factory to discover its wide range of products and standardization logics. Then they will be welcomed in Faimar SA in Baia Mare city, which offers mid-range household and artistic ceramics at a large-scale production. A research and creative session will be held there so that the students will analyse a broad spectrum of original designs and decoration. They will also elaborate their own personal enamelled designs on 30 cm diameter plates and get inspiration from the Romanian traditions of decorative art. The ceramic pieces of work they would have produced, decorated and fired will be put together the exhibition in June 2020.

Learning objectives:

- Discover Romanian culture in its historical, artistic, traditional and contemporary dimensions
- Comprehend different ceramic production processes and manufacturing technologies, at a local level and at a large-scale industry
- Build a collective reflection, in a spirit of intercultural teamwork and curiosity
- Analyse symbols and traditional decoration in the Romanian cultures
- Apprehend artistic techniques by using clays, pigments, enamels and firing for ceramics
- Encourage a research approach to enrich practical learning, in cross-professional environments



Dacian red pottery. On the left: ceramics circa 450 BC © archaeotek.org | On the right: today's traditional red pottery © dli.ro



The village of Bârsana and the wooden monasteries of the Maramureș county © trt



Handmade enamelling at Faimar factory © Faimar



Ceramics from Maramureș © Codrin & Sonia

3rd RCW - 5 days in April 2020: Awareness-raising workshop at Velten and Berlin

OFAJ/DFJW Project leader: Muthesius Kunsthochschule

Velten is a post-industrial city near Berlin and is known as the 'Ofenstadt', which means the 'oven-city'. At the early 20th century, the town was the biggest manufacturer of ceramic stoves and masonry heaters in the world. The 68 oven-factories of the area benefited from rich clay quarries and the expansion of mining in the region to flood the European market with ceramic products: tiles, bricks, ovens, stoves... The small city was very attractive for its good living conditions until the second part of the 20th century. Nowadays, Velten fights for valuing its cultural heritage and is a symbol of the flourishing modern ages of Germany.

The last RCW will take place in Velten and in Berlin for a 5 day stay in April 2020. The international group will focus on a chapter of the history of ceramic production and the role of the industrial revolution in shaping the modern society in Germany. They will also seek to comprehend its architectural, socioeconomic and historico-cultural dimensions, from the 20th century to the present times.

Days 1 to 3 in Velten: The students and the teachers will visit the Ofenstadt, the museums and the old factories to explore there the tension between past and present, durability and loss, prospect and decline. A research laboratory will be arranged in the Ofen-Keramik Museum to provide the students access to the archives and documents, with the strong help of the museum staff. Meanwhile, a professional ceramic artist will assist the students and share practical tips to successfully carry out an artistic research.

Besides, the youngsters will learn about the Bauhaus-inspired work of the late German ceramicist Hedwig Bollhagen by visiting the eponymous museum in Velten. From 1927 to 1931, Hedwig Bollhagen worked as a designer and head of the painting department at the stoneware factories Steingutfabriken Velten-Vordamm in Velten. In 1934, she co-founded the HB-Werkstätten für Keramik in Oberkrämer/Marwitz, which is still in operation. What would follow would be an unrivalled career as one of the greatest designers in modern German history.

Days 4 and 5 in Berlin: Berlin was the showcase of Velten's products in the 19th and 20th centuries and still keeps tracks of the past ceramic consumption, such as bricks and tiles on buildings exteriors. For those last two days, an excursion around the capital will be organised to review the history of Velten's ceramics and its artistic, housing and architectural relevances for the German urban society. The trainees will also visit art galleries and museums, like the Bode Museum for its outstanding collections of European ceramics, from the Byzantine to the baroque ages.

Learning objectives:

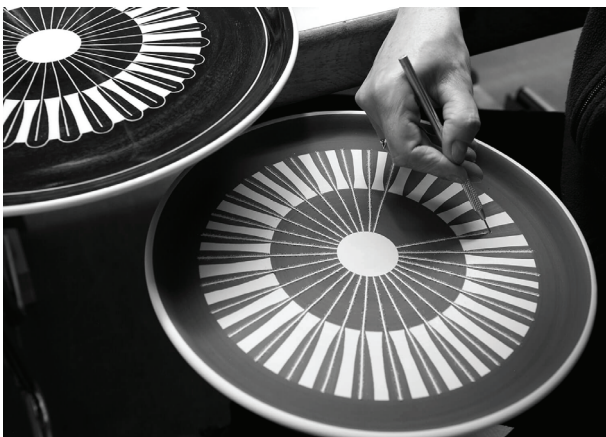
- Discover and trace German ceramics back to the modern ages, from the production sites to the consumption areas
- Raise awareness about social and historico-cultural changes in Velten
- Search for new insights by exploring a part of ceramics, architecture and design of Germany
- Cooperate with the research group in a spirit of intercultural teamwork
- Consolidate the research approach developed during the previous RCW
- Enrich analysis tools, data sources and documentation tools



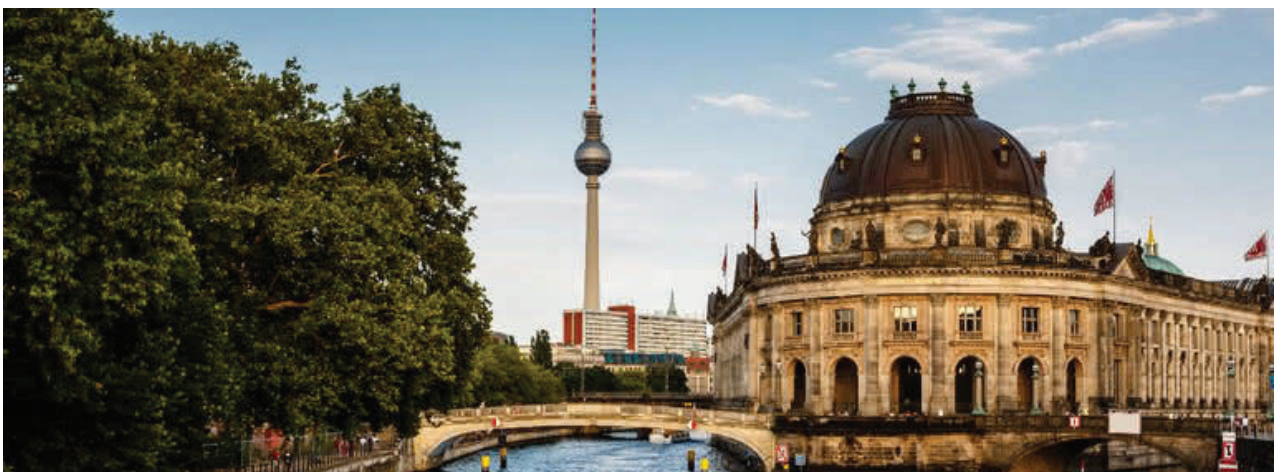
Ofen- und Keramik Museum in Velten © OKMB



Ceramic manufacturers in Velten in the early 1900s © OKMHB | A. Schmidt, Lehmann & Co. GmbH © Kitty Keist Heinrich



Hedwig Bollhagen collections © Hedwig Bollhagen Brand © Constanze Hallensleben



Bode Museum in Berlin © Classicitic

Art/research exhibition - 3 day artwork installation and celebration in June 2020

Project leader : Vent des Forêts

For 3 days in June 2020, Vent des Forêts will once again receive the international research team in Lahaymeix to ultimately install the pieces of work the students would have created for two years. The artworks made in Rairies Montrieux and in Romania will be transported by semi-trailer to Lahaymeix by June 2020.

For that last exercise, the students will work on 3 types of exhibitions for the village. They will first arrange the permanent exhibition of the large-scale sculptures in public places and private gardens in Lahaymeix. They will also prepare the temporary exhibition to provide the public free access to the pieces of research and documents (photos, sketches, texts...) produced along the project. On the last day, the international group will use the plates made in Romania to set the scene for the open-air inaugural festen of the exhibitions.

Pascal Yonet, artistic director of Vent des Forêts, will guide the students to chose the right exhibition sites, in accordance with spatial and landscape constraints in Lahaymeix. To install the artworks and to prepare the event, they will be helpt by the local peoples and the volunteers who are accustomed to provide the artists in residency with technical means and human force.

All the public and the people who supported the project, partners and journalists will bring together around the inaugural event to receive the final results of the project and the youngsters' achievements. The inauguration of the art/research exhibition will mark the end of this two year adventure and will spread the message of cultural openness and international cooperation. All together, they will celebrate the consummation of an exemplary project in which ceramics would have been the cornerstone of academic excellence and mutual understanding

The exhibition catalogue that would trace two years of the project will be officially launched after the event.



Artworks on installation © Domaine de Kerguéhenec