

PRESS RELEASE

DESIGN MUSEUM DEN BOSCH

Design Museum Den Bosch presents
Geert Lap – Specific Objects
1 June–18 August 2019



Geert Lap – Specific Objects offers a visually captivating survey of the peerless work of one of the world's most important post-war ceramic artists. The many works from the museum's own collection have been supplemented by dozens of judiciously selected loans from leading museums and collections. The exhibition was designed by Aldo Bakker, who engages in a dialogue with Lap's work at Design Museum Den Bosch that explores the pursuit of the perfect form.

What comes after perfection?

The ceramic work of the sublime maker Geert Lap (1951–2017) belongs to a modernist tradition that rejected decoration and historical references. In terms of its intent and eloquence, his oeuvre stands comparison with the minimalism of artists like Carl Andre, Donald Judd and André Volten. Lap's striving for perfection formed the heart of his artistic practice and his unsurpassed craft. Objects that failed to live up to his stringent requirements were summarily smashed. But how was he able to keep on raising his standards? What was the flip side to this almost monomaniacal attitude? Where do you go once you have created the perfect form?

Together for the first time

The exhibition offers a survey of every phase in Geert Lap's artistic career. Key works like *Colour Triangle* and *99 Variations* can be viewed in the context of his other work, making this a unique experience. What's more, the *99 Variations* series is being shown in its entirety for the first time since it was completed 25 years ago. In this way, the exhibition gives an impression of an oeuvre that achieved steadily greater heights of sublimity. Design Museum Den Bosch is able here to highlight a minimalism that is rare in the applied arts, while simultaneously addressing the pitfalls of unflagging perfectionism. Thanks to this show, 'ceramics' greatest minimalist', as the gallery owner and author Garth Clark has described Geert Lap, will receive the tribute he deserves.

Dialogue with Aldo Bakker

Geert Lap – Specific Objects has been designed by Aldo Bakker, who shares Lap's pursuit of the perfect form. He admires his fellow designer's dedication and supreme technical skills, while also recognizing the dangers inherent in such uncompromising perfectionism. The affinity between these two outstanding practitioners can be sensed in every detail of the exhibition. Aldo Bakker: 'Geert Lap's thrown forms achieve a sublimity that no one else comes near. The flip side of that perfection is that you end up out there on your own, artistically speaking. His work is autonomous in character too, even though it consists essentially of functional objects like vases and bowls. You could say the same of my own designs, as well.'

New standard work

The exhibition is accompanied by the publication by NAI010 of a new standard work on Geert Lap's life and art. The book centres on the photography of Erik and Petra Hesmerg, who have spent years travelling the world to record Geert Lap's work, gaining them exclusive access along the way to the interiors of private collectors. *Geert Lap – Specific Objects* also explores how Lap's work has been incorporated in major Dutch museum collections, using full-page photographs and an exceptional eye for detail. A biographical essay by Professor Titus M. Eliëns, who has been granted access to the artist's private archives, offers an incisive view of the life and work of a thoroughgoing perfectionist, who devoted himself to achieving the ideal ceramic form. *Geert Lap – Specific Objects* takes its title from the essay by Professor Ernst J. van Alpen, in which he uses the term 'specific object' to situate Lap's work in the tradition of great minimalist art.

Acknowledgements

The exhibition *Geert Lap – Specific Objects* has been made possible in part by the financial support of the Turing Foundation, the Creative Industries Fund NL and the Van Achterbergh-Domhof Foundation.

Photo credit

Geert Lap, Ceramic Forms 1984–1990, from the Design Museum Den Bosch collection. Photography Erik & Petra Hesmerg.

Note for editors (not for publication):

Contact opportunities: the curator Fredric Baas and the designer Aldo Bakker are available to provide further information on the exhibition.

Reader offer: we will be happy to work with you to put together an attractive offer for your readers or viewers. Feel free to contact us to discuss the options.

Visual material is available at www.designmuseum.nl/pers

More information: if you would like to know more, please contact Ms Maan Leo, Marketing & Communication Manager, Design Museum Den Bosch: mleo@designmuseum.nl or +31 6 20 71 85 28.