

THK GALLERY

KING HOUNDEKPINKOU | BIO & CV

King Houndekpinkou (b. 1987, Montreuil, France) is a Franco-Beninese ceramicist who lives in Paris. He works in France, Benin and Japan.

In 2012, his discovery of the Roku Koyō (the six ancient pottery kilns of Japan) encouraged him to visit Bizen, Japan, each year to acquire further knowledge and experience besides local potters. There, King was seduced by their spiritual and ceremonial approach to creating ceramic works, which was reminiscent of Benin's animist cult of Voodoo.

Following this epiphanic experience, King developed Terres Jumelles, a program that consists in fostering a cross-cultural dialogue between the various pottery sites of Benin and Japan through the local practices of ceramics/pottery in both countries.

Today, King has developed a practice that merges tradition, spirituality and visceral creativity while crossing several "borders", whether they are cultural, geographical, generational, disciplinary, technical or historical. Mainly based on the vessel shape and sculptural works, King's practice involves blending materials (e.g.: clays, ashes, powders) from all continents. Though built on strong and proportionate shapes, his works seem disfigured by a surcharge of clay and lively textures that emulate the aesthetics of the Voodoo altars and fetishes of Benin.

The "anatomy" of some works consists of containers shaped separately on the potter's wheel (e.g. vases, cups, bowls, dishes), then assembled together to form a sculptural piece with vivid textures. Although built on a base of simple forms, some of his creations seem "tortured" and "disfigured" by an overload of dense materials, a heap of superimposed matte, shiny, and metallic drips.

They visually represent the accumulation of stories and events that preceded them and from which they derive. If we look at some of the details, we notice a thick enveloping "skin", thorns similar to those found on ritual pots in West Africa. They are reminiscent of certain attributes of plants and animals whose spikes or thorns give them almost divine protection, thus giving them a sacred status.

King is a member of both the International Academy of Ceramics, and the Homo Faber Network of the Michelangelo Foundation based in Geneva, Switzerland. His work is/has been regularly exhibited internationally at art/design fairs, museum exhibitions and biennales in Australia, Benin, Hong-Kong, Japan, Morocco, Senegal, Spain, South Korea and USA.

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EDUCATION:

2014

- School of Art and Ceramics Technique, Porte de Vincennes, France

2013 – 2015

- Training under Bizen potter Toshiaki Shibuta, Bizen, Japan

2012 – 2014

- Mire Workshop, Village St Paul, Paris, France

SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

2021

- *King Houndekpinkou: Dans Mon Jardin...*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France

2020

- *King Houndekpinkou: Gravité*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France

2019

- *King Houndekpinkou: Belles Brutes*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France

2018

- *Thank you for the clay!*, Fujiki Gallery, Shigaraki, Japan

2017

- *King Houndekpinkou: Time on Earth*, Vallois America, New York, USA
- *King Houndekpinkou: De Passage sur Terre*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France

2016

- *Un dimanche à la galerie: King Houndekpinkou*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France
- *Terre de Mémoire*, Centre - Arts & Cultures, Cotonou, Benin

BIENNALES

2019

- *10th Korean International Ceramic Biennale*, Incheon World Ceramic Center, Incheon, South Korea
- *Biennale Internationale des Métiers d'Art @ Création Révélation 2019 - "Le Banquet"*, Le Grand Palais, Paris, France

2018

- *Biennale << De Mains De Ma.tres Luxembourg - Gestes @ Merveilles >>*, Banque et Caisse d'Épargne de l'État du Luxembourg (BCEE), Luxembourg (curated by Jean-Marc Dimanche)

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2016

- *Subabiennale - Biennale de Dakar Dak Art' 2016 OFF*, CICAD - Dakar, Senegal (curated by Salimata Diop)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2021

- *SPRING*, Sarah Scout Presents Gallery, Melbourne, Australia
- *1:54 - Redefining the Trends, Histories in the Making*, Christie's London, London, UK
- *Royal Academy of Arts: Summer Exhibition 2021*, Royal Academy of Arts, London, UK
- *Cultural Affairs: Art Without Borders*, Grassi Museum of Applied Arts, Leipzig, Germany
- *Contemporary Benin*, Fondation Donwahi, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

2020

- *International Academy of Ceramics Exhibition*, Guozhong Ceramic Art Museum, Beijing, China
- *Là où l'Âme se Plaît*, Carrousel du Louvre, Paris, France (Curated by Galerie Vallois and UNESCO)

2019

- *Polyartworks | Performer*, Minnano Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- *Les Asen - Arts du Bénin - Parcours des Mondes 2019*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France
- *An Idea Needing to be Made: Contemporary Ceramics*, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, Australia
- *Visceral Clay: Look Don't Touch*, Gerald Peters Projects, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA
- *NCECA - Trans-Pacific Dialogue: Marrying Form and Surface Across the Globe*, Collaborative Design Group, Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

2018

- *Céramique Contemporaine: les artistes de Viviane S.*, Abbaye de Léhon, Dinan, France (curated by Stéphanie Le Follic-Hadida, IAC/UNESCO)
- *Hier, Aujourd'hui, Demain - Parcours des Mondes 2018*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France
- *Palau de Casavells - Summer Exhibition*, Palau de Casavells, Girona, Spain
- *Vasa Vasorum | The Vase in Contemporary Art + Design*, Peters Projects, Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA (curated by Garth Clark)
- *Business as Usual*, Minnano Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
- *Clay Gulgong 2018: The Masters' Show*, Gulgong, New South Wales, Australia

2017

- *Regarding George Ohr: Contemporary Ceramics in the Spirit of the Mad Potter*, Boca Raton Museum of Art, Florida, USA (curated by Garth Clark)
- *Africa Blooms Japan*, Cat Street Gallery, Hong Kong

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2016

- *Kaïdin e) King: l'éternel de l'immatériel*, Espace Christiane Peugeot, Paris, France
- *Hommage au Bénin, 20 artistes contemporains Béninois*, Château de Tanlay, France

2015

- *Temps modernes, la mémoire de l'esclavage et l'art contemporain*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France
- *Coco Fronsac e) King*, Galerie Vallois, Paris, France

ART FAIRS

2021

- *ST-ART - Foire Européenne d'art contemporain e) de design*, Parc des Expositions, Strasbourg, France
- *Art X Lagos*, The Federal Palace, Lagos, Nigeria
- *AKAA - Also Known as Africa - Contemporary Art Fair*, Le Carreau du Temple, Paris, France
- *1-54 - Contemporary African Art Fair - London*, Somerset House, London, UK
- *Spring 1883 Art Fair*, Sarah Scout Presents, Melbourne, Australia
- *1:54 NYC Online - Contemporary African Art Fair*, New York, USA
- *Collect Art Fair: International Art Fair for Contemporary Craft and Design*, Online + VIP Showroom w/ 50 Golborne, Paris, France

2019

- *The Salon Art + Design*, Park Avenue Armory, New York, USA
- *KOGEI - Art Fair Kanazawa*, The Share Hotels, Kanazawa, Japan
- *Art Fair Tokyo 2019*, Tokyo International Forum, Tokyo, Japan

2018

- *AKAA - Also Known as Africa - Contemporary Art Fair*, Le Carreau du Temple, Paris, France
- *Art Paris Art Fair 2018*, Le Grand Palais, Paris, France
- *1-54 - Contemporary African Art Fair*, La Mamounia Palace, Marrakech, Morocco

2017

- *AKAA - Also Known as Africa - Contemporary Art Fair*, Le Carreau du Temple, Paris, France
- *Art Paris Art Fair 2017*, Le Grand Palais, Paris, France

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RESIDENCIES

2018

- Shigaraki Ceramic Culture Park, Shigaraki, Japan

2016

- Le Centre Arts & Culture, Cotonou, Benin

MUSEUM / INSTITUTION / PRIVATE / PERMANENT COLLECTIONS

- Grassi Museum of Applied Art – Leipzig, Germany
- The Republic of Benin's Presidency – Cotonou, The Republic of Benin
- Tokyo Embassy of the Republic of Benin – Tokyo, Japan
- Gyeonggi Ceramic Museum Korea Ceramic Foundation – Gyeonggi, South Korea
- Boca Raton Museum of Art – Boca Raton, Florida, USA
- Barbara Bluhm-Kaul – Chicago, USA
- Le Petit Musée de la Récade – Cotonou, Benin

CONFERENCES / PANELS / SYMPOSIUMS / LECTURES

2019

- Public Program – *An Idea Needing to be Made: Contemporary Ceramics*, Lecture on personal work, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, Australia
- Educator's Program – *An Idea Needing to be Made: Contemporary Ceramics*, Lecture on personal work, Manningham Art Studios, Melbourne, Australia
- King Houndekpinkou: Connecting with the Clay, Beyond all Borders, Lecture on personal work, Hokkaido University, Sapporo, Japan
- King Houndekpinkou: Connecting with the Clay, Beyond all Borders, Lecture on personal work, Seika Kyoto University, Kyoto, Japan
- Trans-Pacific Dialogue: Marrying Form and Surface Across the Globe Panel discussion: featuring Glenn Barkley (AUS), Virginia Leonard (NZ), Andrew Casto (USA), David Hicks (USA) and Mindy Solomon (USA), The University of Iowa / NCECA 2019, Minneapolis Convention Center, USA

2018

- Lecture on personal work, Clay Gulgong 2018 Gulgong, New South Wales, Australia

2017

- *Regarding George Ohr: Contemporary Ceramics in the Spirit of the Mad Potter* Lecture on personal work, Florida Atlantic University, Florida, USA

2016

- *Terre de Mémoire*, Residency conference / lecture, Le Centre Arts & Culture, Cotonou, Benin

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WORKSHOPS

2019

- Educator's Program – *An Idea Needing to be Made: Contemporary Ceramics*, Demonstration of building techniques, Manningham Art Studios, Melbourne, Australia
- Public Program – *An Idea Needing to be Made: Contemporary Ceramics*, Demonstration of building techniques, Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne, Australia

2018

- Clay Gulgong 2018, Demonstration of building techniques Gulgong, New South Wales, Australia

PUBLISHED MATERIALS

- Trans-Pacific Dialogue: Marrying Form and Surface Across the Globe – NCECA Journal n°40, March 2019
- George Edgar Ohr “Mad Potter of Biloxi” – La Revue de la Céramique et du Verre n°219, March 2018