

## From the book: *Sound of clay*, by Brit Dyrnes, 2023:

Brit Dyrnes (b.1955) is considered a doyenne of the ceramics field, an artist whose mature production demonstrates a persistently exploratory approach to the creative task. After more than forty years of professional activity, she is known for her deep commitment to the politics of her field and the improvement of conditions for those who work in it, channelled not least through her position as head of the Norwegian Association for Arts & Crafts (NK, Norske Kunsthåndverkere), Midt-Norge. In 2019, NK honoured her efforts with a special award. Thanks to her active presence in Møre and Romsdal County and the recent founding of Kvenna Kunstverksted, a ceramics workshop at Stangvik in Surnadal, she is a prominent figure in our regional arts scene.

With *The Sound of Clay*, we are proud to turn a spotlight on Dyrnes' art. This is an extensive presentation and the artist's largest museum exhibition to date. Considering the museum's emphasis on the period from Art Nouveau to the present, we wanted to highlight Dyrnes' enduring preoccupation with materiality. Our heartfelt thanks to the artist! She has embraced the museum's invitation and worked with dedication to create a powerful exhibition that feels highly personal yet at the same time universal.

The exhibition shows works Dyrnes has created in recent years, including an entirely new project in collaboration with musician Lena Nymark and dancer Rannei Grenne. At the same time, the exhibition is retrospective. Visitors are given an insight into the background of Dyrnes' art and the people and themes that have influenced her. They are invited to browse the artist's own book collection and to take a closer look at the tools she uses in her work. The result is a greater understanding of the artist's creative process.

A further opportunity to get up close to the artist and her work is the current publication. The article by art historian Gudrun Eidsvik provides a broad contextualisation of Brit Dyrnes' production with deeper dives into selected pieces and series. The contribution by Dyrnes' fellow artist Toril Redalen alternates between broad philosophical questions and the very near – the almost intimate sphere that can perhaps only be truly shared by colleagues. My co-curator, Solfrid Otterholm, has transcribed a conversation between herself and the artist in the run-up to the exhibition. It is an interview that testifies to the mutual trust between artist and curator that characterised the process of creating the exhibition.

For us as a museum, it is important to produce knowledge that lives on even after the actual exhibition has ended. It is therefore highly satisfying for us to present this publication. In addition to the aforementioned authors, we wish to thank the designer Øystein Arbo for a delightful result. It is our hope that the exhibition and the publication will enable more people to get to know Brit Dyrnes and her life with clay.

*Benedikte Holen*

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