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A tribute to the German Ceramic Art

works from MIC Collection



MIC Project Room, August 31 - September 9, 2018

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF CERAMICS IN FAENZA
www.micfaenza.org

Germany Guest Country of Argilla Italia 2018

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A little tribute to the German history of the art has been paid at MIC inside the 'Project room', through the works from the retrospective and modern collection of the museum. By now, several pieces are permanently exhibited in the MIC exhibition halls (Europe hall - hall 13) and some others are collected in the hidden storage area of the museum. The German ceramic history includes a limited production of majolica, anyway its most popular characteristic is the salt-glazed stoneware, associated to the well-known jugs for beer, produced starting from the end of the 14th century in Rhineland and in the Westerwald.

The real revolution that changed the history of European ceramics, linked to the German ceramics, was the discovery and production of hard paste porcelain: in 1708-10, the first European plant of porcelain was established in Meissen, Saxony. In a short time, several manufactures arose both in Germany (Fürstenberg in 1747, Berlin in 1751, Frankenthal in 1753, Ludwigsburg in 1758) and all over Europe. During the 18th century, the porcelain production used to follow the 'chinoiserie' style, after that the potters developed a production showing a 'western' trend characterized by floral decorations, little sculptures, table sets, vessels with new shapes, designed for the 'exotic' beverages (coffee, tea, chocolate) imported from the Orient and Mexico in the 16th -17th century. Several manufactures arose throughout the 19th century, following the trends of the epoch.

During the 20th century, a focal production was represented by the Weimar Republic ceramics. This was an original but short-term production (1919-1933), characterized by the synergy between the German industry and designers trained at the avant-garde school of Bauhaus. The design of functional ceramics was one of the ways to innovate the mass production. Constructivism, Neo-plasticism and Abstraction were the main trends that originated the lively spray decorations of the everyday objects. Among the main manufactures of these productions there were the C&E Carstens in Gräfenroda, the Lehmann&Sohn, the Grünstadt, the E. Werner&Co in Bunzlau, the famous Villeroy&Boch in Torgau, Bonn, Dresden and Mettlach, the J. Paul&Sohn in Bunzlau, the Chr. Carstens in Neuhaldensleben, just to mention the most relevant. Owing to the prohibitionism, regarding the contemporary art considered 'degenerated, communist and not German', during the second half of the 1930s, this rich production was interrupted in favour of more traditional shapes and decorations.

The memory of this glorious experience went on after the Second World War thanks to the Rosenthal manufacture in Selb. During the years, it has been characterized by a refined design planned by artists, architects and designers who have proposed new lines of objects, sources of inspirations for many international manufactures.