



RELIEF (SAMARIUM) / 2020
Stones / Ceramic / 36 x 27 x 10 cm
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RELIEFE

I was invited to the Workspace residency at CERCCO – the Experimentation and Research Centre for Contemporary Ceramics of the Geneva University of Art and Design – where I had the pleasure of working for three months from September to December 2020.

I used my three-month residency at CERCCO to both expand my relief work and to test the possibilities of melting stones.

What initially began with tests on small stone samples using different firing temperatures, eventually led to a series of compositional experiments.

Like in geology, the plates overlap, melt into one another or fall apart. Every attempt thus became a solidified miracle. Stones that I otherwise found aesthetically difficult when not fired became my favourites through the process of firing, and vice versa.

When hewing stones in a classical way, it is necessary to work away at them in a controlled, constant manner. It is quite the opposite when melting stones. Every experimental arrangement harbours a surprising result. Of course, experience of which firing temperature triggers what result in which material can be incorporated, but since even the smallest difference in thickness, storage, direction, temperature, etc., can actually make a big difference, it is impossible to control the outcome precisely.

It is precisely this letting go into the unknown that fascinated me incredibly.

The clay test vessels, which are supposed to prevent uncontrolled melting in the kiln, were gradually developed further in terms of their shape and material until they finally became media for images. The wildest compositions were able to be preserved in their solidified state due to the quality of the melting and the adhesion of the stones with the clay.

While working on this project, I started a new series of reliefs. Negatives made of plaster of Paris were created from modelling balloons in order to then cast balloon blanks by means of clay casting, which were then connected in their reproduced state to create figurative relief constructions.

The “slimy” glaze chosen for this directly competes with the precise and perfect porcelain surface. Using the single balloon as a line, constructions could thus be assembled that are reminiscent of fins or radiator-like figurative structures. The sprues were broken off to give the hollow shape of the balloons an organic narrative.

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Frutigen 28. January 2021
Reto Steiner



RELIEF (DOLAMID) / 2020
Stones / Ceramic / 29 x 20 x 6 cm
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RELIEF (COBALT) / 2020
Stones / Ceramic / 29 x 20 x 6 cm
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RELIEF (FLUOR) / 2020
 Glazed Porcelain / 48 x 33 x 10 cm
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RELIEF (BORGAS) / 2020
 Glazed Porcelain / 48 x 33 x 10 cm
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