

Press release of 29 November 2012

«Inspired by Japan»

Martin Eisenhower, photography, and Gudrun Paysen, ceramics

Japanese art has fascinated Europe for hundreds of years and has continually inspired European artists. The photographer Martin Eisenhower and the ceramicist Gudrun Paysen carry on this dialogue between East and West.

«Winter spirits from Hokkaido» – this is how photographer **Martin Eisenhower** (*1968) refers to the red-crowned crane and whooper swan that he has been photographing on Japan's most northerly island since 2005. With these images the multi-award winning Swiss/German nature photographer is now making a name for himself as a fine art photographer.

Inspired by the woodcuts of Hokusai and Hiroshige, Eisenhower creates distinct works that capture the moment, combine calm and dynamism and inspire with their graphic and emotional power. Two-dimensionality, lack of shadow and decorative arrangement are reminiscent of the Japanese woodcut. At the same time the images attest to the artist's bond with nature.

Inspired by Henri Cartier-Bresson's concept of the «decisive moment», Eisenhower seeks to put the elements of an image into a wider context, at the right time and in the right light. Through careful choice of scenery he reduces colour down to shades of grey and a handful of deliberate accents. His moving works tell surprising tales – in natural light and without interfering with the subject.

Japan also inspires the German ceramicist **Gudrun Paysen** (*1947), who lived in the country for twelve years. Particularly fascinated by ceramics, the former translator studied ceramic-making at various traditional technical schools in Tokyo. The tradition of ceramic-making is highly regarded in everyday Japanese life and is therefore cultivated both as a craft and as a fine art.

The works of Gudrun Paysen feature simple forms and glazes, mirroring the philosophy of Japanese ceramics. Paysen sees herself as an intermediary between natural material and emerging vessel. The character of the ceramic is determined by the clay, sourced by Paysen in Germany and Japan. Glazes are bound to the clay in the kiln and are generally produced from wood and plant ash. Irregularities are not considered mistakes, but rather a result of the creative process. They lend the ceramic its own vivid originality.

The balance, elegant simplicity and quiet presence of Paysen's vessels impress, as do the harmonious glazes that complement the clay. The vessels are also designed to be used on a daily basis and, as such, can develop their beauty in everyday life.

You and your friends are warmly invited to the exhibition preview of «Inspired by Japan» on Thursday 13 December 2012 from 17.00 to 20.00. Gudrun Paysen will be present.

The exhibition runs from 14 December 2012 to 16 February 2013.

Opening times: Wednesday to Friday 12.00 – 18.00, Saturday 11.00 – 15.00, or by appointment.

Christmas holidays from 24 December 2012 to 6 January 2013.

For further information:

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Martin Eisenhawer

Background

- 1982 Starts practising nature photography
Takes photography courses and develops photographs at his school's black and white laboratory in Münster (Germany)
- 1988 First experience of animal photography at a workshop in Münster Zoo
Inaugural photography exhibition and award
- Since 2000 International freelance photographer
Speaker at master classes in various countries
Jury member at photography competitions
- 2005 Double category winner at «Wildlife Photographer of the Year»
2006 «European Wildlife Photographer of the Year» awards
2007 Awards at «Wildlife Photographer of the Year» and «International Wildlife and Nature Photography Festival Montier-en-Der»
- Since 2007 President of the Society of German Nature Photographers (GDT)

Exhibitions

- 2005 – 2012 Various exhibitions as nature photographer in Germany, Spain, France and Italy
- 2011 Exhibition «Japan – Berührungspunkt zweier Welten» together with Daniel Gendre at the «Japan Information and Cultural Center» of the Japanese embassy in Berne.
- 2012 Group exhibition «Regards croisés Orient-Occident» at the Château de St-Maurice

Selection of works

1. Martin Eisenhawer, *Whooper swan (Cygnus cygnus) and oak tree, Study 1*, Hokkaido, Japan, 2011, inkjet print, 100 x 140 cm.
2. Martin Eisenhawer, *Red-crowned crane (Grus japonensis), Study 18*, Hokkaido, Japan, 2006, inkjet print, 80 x 110 cm.
3. Martin Eisenhawer, *Red-crowned cranes (Grus japonensis), Study 14*, Hokkaido, Japan, 2011, inkjet print, 100 x 140 cm.
4. Martin Eisenhawer, *Whooper swans (Cygnus cygnus), Study 3*, Hokkaido, Japan, 2011, inkjet print, 100 x 140 cm.

Gudrun Paysen

Background

- 1975 – 1978 Ceramics studies at the Nihon Toge Club in Tokyo
 1981 – 1985 Ceramics studies at the Nihon Toge Club in Tokyo
 1985 – 1989 Further training at Japan International Ceramics in Tokyo
 1986 Opening of own studio in Tokyo
 Since 1989 Own studio and exhibition space in Berg, Lake Starnberger (Germany)

Exhibitions

- 1989 Galerie Kaya, Tokyo
 1990 Galerie Gottfried-Weber-Haus, Freinsheim
 1992 Glas und Ceramic Galerie, Bonn; Galerie S, Forstinning
 1993 Galerie Gottfried-Weber-Haus, Freinsheim; Galerie Hollerhaus, Irschenhausen/Icking
 1994 Galerie S, Forstinning
 1995 Galerie Hollerhaus, Irschenhausen/Icking
 1997 Taubenturm of the Heimatverein Diessen
 1999 Kunstsalon Ohm, Munich; Mohrvilla, Munich
 2000 Galerie Hollerhaus, Irschenhausen/Icking; Homburg Castle in Homburg-Triefenstein; Galerie Zulauf at the Gottfried-Weber-Haus, Freinsheim; Exhibition in the lobby of the Industrie- und Handelskammer in Augsburg und Schwaben; Museum for Ethnology, Munich
 2001 Arts and Crafts in Berg: Group exhibition Painting – Jewellery – Ceramics
 2002 Municipal Museum Siegburg
 2003 Siebold-Museum, Würzburg; Kunstsalon Ohm, Munich; Franck-Haus, Marktheidenfeld; Kulturmodell Passau
 2004 Kulturverein Olching
 2005 Potters' market Diessen – Exhibition at the Taubenturm; Art Tenne, Wangen
 2009 Otto-Hellmeier-Kulturhaus, Raisting; Nymphenburg Palace, Munich; Akimatsuri, Beuerberg; Forstlicher Versuchsgarten, Grafrath; Wasserturm, Dachau
 2010 Galerie Terra Auri, Munich; Orangerie, Munich
 2011 Nymphenburg Palace, Munich; U-Bahn Galerie, Munich
 2012 Municipal Museum Siegburg
 Since 1996 Regular studio exhibitions in Berg
 Since 2000 Regular exhibitions at the Japanfest Munich

Selection of works

1. Gudrun Paysen, *tea bowl*, clay: Hagi, glaze: Ash from chestnut leaves, height 9.5 cm, Ø 12 cm.
2. Gudrun Paysen, *tea caddy*, clay: Hagi, glaze: Oribe, height 8.2 cm, Ø 4 cm.
3. Gudrun Paysen, *bamboo-formed vase*, clay: Earthenware, glaze: Iraho, height 32 cm, Ø 8.5 cm.
4. Gudrun Paysen, *bowl*, clay: Earthenware, glaze: Oribe, height 5.5 cm, Ø 24 cm.