Press pack
December 2015

My blue China
The Colors of Globalization

Musée Ariana, Geneva, 16 December 2015 till 28 February 2016

Press visit
Tuesday, 15 December 2015 at 3 pm

Inauguration
Tuesday, 15 December 2015 at 7 pm, dress code blue and white

In the presence of Michel Bernadaud (President of the Bernardaud Board of Directors), Hélène Huret (Director of the Bernardaud Corporate Foundation) and Laurent de Verneuil (Exhibition Curator)

10, avenue de la Paix
CH - 1202 Geneva

Press pack downloadable on: www.ariana-geneve.ch

Un musée
Ville de Genève

www.ariana-geneve.ch
My blue China
The Colors of Globalization

MUSÉE ARIANA, GENEVA, FROM 16 DECEMBER 2015 TILL 28 FEBRUARY 2016

Geneva, December 2015 - Recent cases of withdrawal into cultural identity have led many artists to consider the phenomenon of cultural globalization. My Blue China sheds new light on this issue by bringing together the works of thirteen internationally renowned contemporary artists which explicitly refer to blue and white decorated porcelain. This exhibition, curated by Laurent de Verneuil and instigated by the Bernardaud Corporate Foundation in Limoges, shows to what extent this universal motif revitalizes our aesthetic and identity-based preoccupations, from artistic hybridization to cultural imperialism, through ceramics, painting, photo and video.

The arrival of Chinese porcelain decorated with cobalt blue, first in the Middle East and then in Europe, was undeniably one of the most significant upheavals in the entire history of ceramics! Persian fritware, Delftware, Meissen porcelain and the printed decorations on English creamware all show a dominant oriental influence, with cobalt blue omnipresent. These developments, well documented in the Musée Ariana's collections and to which a whole gallery of the permanent exhibition is devoted, reflect the richness and diversity of the cultural and commercial exchanges between the Far East, the Middle East and Europe. The taste for this mysterious “white gold” among Persian potters and later in the European courts continued to grow, leading to an exponential increase in porcelain exports. The passion for Chinese blue and white ware within the history of ceramics has travelled through time and space and still continues today. Contemporary ceramists and artists adopt a fascinating, offbeat approach to this phenomenon that successfully transcends the boundaries of ceramic creation.

The Musée Ariana is delighted to host this exhibition and has taken the opportunity to add some historical elements on the theme through pieces from our own collections.

For the official opening to be held on 15 December at 7 pm in the presence of Michel Bernardaud (President of the Bernardaud Board of Directors) and Hélène Huret (Director of the Bernardaud Corporate Foundation), Laurent de Verneuil (Exhibition Curator) together with some of the artists, the management of the Musée Ariana invites all participants and visitors to follow the dress code of blue and white, in keeping with the theme of the exhibition.

Isabelle Naef Galuba and Anne-Claire Schumacher
Director and Curator of the Musée Ariana
The Views of the Curator of the Exhibition, Laurent de Verneuil

If globalization were to be given a flag, its colors would be blue and white, like that of the United Nations. Before becoming a universal symbol of harmony between peoples, these colors could well have been at the very origin of cultural globalization. Delft and Meissen were the main catalysts, just like Victorian England, where the unprecedented development of trade in blue and white ware in the form of the Willow Pattern began. This design, produced by 18th century English engravers, was inspired by Chinese culture. It is at best an imitation, at worst a distortion of it. In his famous epigram, “I find it harder and harder every day to live up to my blue china,” Oscar Wilde both praises and satirizes this craze for exotic refinement, in a warning against resorting to imitation. For the Far East as depicted in the Willow Pattern or in the drawings of Hokusai only existed in the minds of the artists who saw and portrayed it. Yet this imprecise, shifting but unifying notion still has the power to fire the imagination of many artists. My Blue China provides new insight into the blue and white ceramics that linked China to the shores of Europe, flooded with such wares from the 17th century onwards; an example of globalization that far predates our own contemporary notions of it. Inspired by its various forms – the Willow Pattern, Delft, Sèvres, Talavera and other types of majolica – the thirteen artists* presented in My Blue China incorporate these motifs in a new way in their ceramic work, painting, sculpture, digital photography and video. This exhibition shows just how much the blue and white tradition permeates and renews the perennial questions of aesthetics, identity and acculturation in the current context of cultural globalization.

Laurent de Verneuil
Exhibition Curator

*Ann Agee (USA, 1959)
Katsuyo Aoki (Japon / Japan, 1972)
Barnaby Barford (Grande-Bretagne / Great Britain, 1977)
Sin-ying Ho (USA, 1963)
Kim Joon (Corée / Korea, 1966)
Fabrice Langlade (France, 1964)
Jayne Lloyd (Grande-Bretagne / Great Britain, 1979)
Claire Partington (Grande-Bretagne / Great Britain, 1973)
Caroline Slotte (Finlande / Finland, 1975)
Yeessookyung (Corée / Korea, 1963)
Brendan Tang (Canada, 1975)
Jan De Vliegher (Belgique / Belgium, 1964)
Bouke de Vries (Pays-Bas / Netherlands, 1960)

Un musée
Ville de Genève

www.ariana-geneve.ch
My blue China
The Colors of Globalization

Musée Ariana, Geneva, from 16 December 2015 till 28 February 2016

Practical Information

Musée Ariana
Swiss Museum for ceramics and glass
Avenue de la Paix 10 | 1202 Geneva
T +41(0)22 418 54 50 - F +41(0)22 418 54 51
www.ariana-geneve.ch

Open from Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm, closed on Monday
Entrance fee (CHF 8.-/CHF 6.-), free until 18s and on the first Sunday of the month.
On other Sundays, buy one ticket, get one free

Exhibition preview: Tuesday 15 December at 7 pm

Press visit: Tuesday 15 December at 3 pm or on demand: presse.ariana@ville-ge.ch

Guided Tours: Sundays 10 January and 7 February at 11 am, 28 February at 3 pm

Children’s Workshops
“En bleu et blanc” (In Blue and White)
Wednesday 17 February and Friday 19 February 1:30 – 5:30 pm

An exhaustive exhibition booklet will be given to visitors

Exhibition Organization:
Isabelle Naef Galuba, director

Exhibition Curators:
Laurent de Verneuil, curator freelance
Anne-Claire Schumacher, curator at the Musée Ariana, anne-claire.schumacher@ville-ge.ch

Visitor Services:
Hélène de Ryckel, Head of Visitor Services
adp-ariana@ville-ge.ch

Press Office:
Christine Azconegui Suter, Head of communication
T +41(0)22 418 54 55
presse.ariana@ville-ge.ch

Musée Ariana
10 Avenue de la Paix
1202 Geneva
T+41 22 418 54 50 - ariana@ville-ge.ch - www.ariana-geneve.ch
My blue China
The Colors of Globalization

Musée Ariana, Geneva, from 16 December 2015 till 28 February 2016

Visuals for the Press

01 Kim Joon (Corée, 1966)
Blue Jean Blues – Jimi Hendrix, 2012
Tirage numérique / digital print

Propriété de l'artiste
Photo : Kim Joon

02 Kim Joon (Corée, 1966)
Blue Jean Blues – Taxi Driver, 2012
Tirage numérique / digital print

Propriété de l'artiste
Photo : Kim Joon
03  Fabrice Langlade (France, 1964)
*Chinoiserie*, 2006-2008
Résine de synthèse, bleu de Prusse, épingles /
Synthetic resin, Prussian blue, pins

Propriété de l’artiste
Photo: Fabrice Langlade

04  Jan De Vliegher (Belgique, 1964)
*China Blue*, 2015
Acrylique sur toile / Acrylic on canvas

Propriété de l’artiste
Photo: Dominique Provost

05  Jan De Vliegher (Belgique, 1964)
*China Blue*, 2015
Acrylique sur toile / Acrylic on canvas
200x300 cm

Propriété de l’artiste
Photo: Dominique Provost
06  **Barnaby Barford (Grande-Bretagne, 1977)**  
*Conversation Piece, 2002*  
Animation digitale et matériaux divers / Digital animation and mixed media

Propriété de l'artiste  
Photo : Courtesy Museum of Fine Arts Houston

07  **Bouke de Vries (Pays-Bas, 1960)**  
*Cultural Revolution repudiated (detail), 2014*  
Céramique, bois, plexiglas, tiges de rose / Ceramic, wood

Propriété de l'artiste  
Photo : Tim Higgins

08  **Bouke de Vries (Pays-Bas, 1960)**  
*Dead nature 4, 2009*  
Céramique, verre, bois, plexiglas, boutons de rose / Ceramic, glass, marble, perspex, rose hips

Propriété de l'artiste  
Photo : Tim Higgins
09 Bouke de Vries (Pays-Bas, 1960)
Chaos, 2009
Céramique, verre, bois, plexiglas, boutons de rose / Ceramic, glass, marble, perspex, rose hips

Propriété de l'artiste
Photo : Tim Higgins

10 Bouke de Vries (Pays-Bas, 1960)
Cultural Revolution repudiated, 2014
Céramique, bois, plexiglas, tiges de rose / Ceramic, wood

Propriété de l'artiste
Photo : Tim Higgins

11 Jane Lloyd (Grande-Bretagne, 1979)
Trying to Keep Up With My Blue China, Take Away Plate, Peckham Library, 2015
Stylo à bille sur polystyrène / Ball point pen on polystyrene

Propriété de l'artiste
Photo : Jane Lloyd
12  **Katsuyo Aoki (Japon, 1972)**  
*Trolldom, 2010*  
Porcelaine / Porcelain  

Propriété de l'artiste  
Photo : Mareo Suemasa

13  **Claire Partington (Grande-Bretagne, 1973)**  
*The Suffolk Conversation, 2015*  
Faïence, émail, émaux, lustre / Earthenware, glaze, enamel, lustre  

Propriété de l'artiste  
Photo : Claire Partington

14  **Caroline Slotte (Finlande, 1975)**  
*Landscape Multiple, 2012*  
Faïence / Earthenware  

Propriété de l'artiste  
Photo : Caroline Slotte
15  Ann Agee (Etats-Unis, 1959)
Gross Domestic Product, 2010
Porcelaine, armature métallique / Glazed porcelain, steel armature

Propriété de l’artiste
Photo : Joseph Hu

NOTE TO JOURNALISTS

The Musée Ariana Press Office is pleased to inform you that images can be downloaded from our website and are royalty free for the duration of the exhibition. Requests for access should be sent to presse.ariana@ville-ge.ch or made by telephone on +41 (0)22 418 54 55.

Any reproduction must be accompanied by the following mentions: name of museum, author(s), title of work and photographer’s name. Other indications (dimensions, techniques, date, etc.) are desirable but not compulsory. These elements can be found in the press pack downloadable from our website www.ariana-geneve.ch.

We would be grateful if you could please send a copy of your publication to the Musée Ariana Press Office.

With our thanks

Musée Ariana- Press Office – 10, avenue de la Paix - 1202 Geneva – presse.ariana@ville-ge.ch