

In 2016, taking a dramatic shift in style and media from the paintings and sculptures he had previously produced, Anselm Reyle created a series of sculptural objects in the form of large ceramic vases. The strong textures and vivid colour of his previous practice were carried forward to this new body of work.

Stylistically similar to West German Art Pottery of the 1950–60s, many of Reyle's handmade objects were created in collaboration with German ceramic factories employing traditional techniques. One of these techniques is commonly, if somewhat erroneously, referred to as 'Fat Lava'. Fat Lava as a term is often used to reference all West German Art Pottery, but specifically it describes a type of thick, flowing glaze, which is a feature of much, but not all, ceramic work of that period. Technically known as a volcanic glaze, the chemical composition of Fat Lava leads to the development of bubbles, or 'pores', during firing, giving the surface of the finished object a pumice-like appearance.

To some extent Reyle's earlier work, which questioned the relationship between high art and kitsch, resurfaced in his ceramics. These draw attention to the vagaries of the art market and its ability to transform a utilitarian, mass-produced domestic object into something collectible, sought after and valuable; or to do the opposite, making high-value artworks practically worthless overnight.

Reyle's new body of work also seems to question, or compound, the much-debated separation of art and craft. The art/craft schism has been an issue for several decades, and while many curators, critics and artist-makers prefer to think of it as a continuum with no clear boundaries, the pervasive view is that the difference is determined by intentionality. This dichotomy was established, and has persisted, predominately in the West, whereas in non-Western cultures, the distinction is less clear or simply doesn't exist. In Asia a ceramic teapot can be appreciated just as much for its aesthetics as it is for its function. Reyle's own use of ceramics has a relationship to Japanese culture and aesthetics. The Japanese concept of *wabi-sabi* proposes that an object can be impermanent and/or carry imperfections, yet it can be both practical and beautiful. In Japan, an old, broken teapot can be repaired in such a way that it takes on a new life; it becomes even more attractive and highly regarded, even though it may no longer be used as originally intended. Many of Reyle's works are vase-like, yet cannot function as such, since each one carries an intentional flaw—a crack or fissure that is clearly evident and places his works firmly in the realm of the art-object.

● Adrian George

Anselm Reyle Born 1970, Tübingen, Germany. Lives and works in Berlin. **Selected Solo Exhibitions:** 2017 – Galerie Almine Rech, Brussels; König Galerie, Berlin; 2016 – 'Keramik', Contemporary Fine Arts, Berlin; 2013 – 'Ultracore', MAGASIN – Centre National D'Art Contemporain Grenoble, Grenoble, France; 2012 – 'Mystic Silver', Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany; 2011 – 'Anselm Reyle', Des Moines Art Center, Iowa; 2010 – 'Elemental Threshold', Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle, Belgium; 2009 – 'Monochrome Age', Gagosian Gallery, New York; 2008 – 'White Earth', Galerie Almine Rech, Brussels; 2007 – 'ARS NOVA', Kunsthalle Zürich. **Selected Group Exhibitions:** 2016 – 'Franz West – ARTISTCLUB', 21er Haus, Belvedere, Vienna; 2015 – 'Made in Germany: Contemporary Art from the Rubell Family Collection', McNay Art Museum, San Antonio, Texas; 'Deutsche Kunst nach 1960', Essl Museum, Klosterneuburg, Austria; 2013 – 'BubeDameKönigAss', Martin Eder, Michael Kunze, Anselm Reyle, Thomas Scheibitz', Neue Nationalgalerie, Berlin; 2011 – 'The Shape Of Things To Come: New Sculpture', The Saatchi Gallery, London; 2010 – 'Bilder über Bilder. Diskursive Malerei von Albers bis Zobernig aus der Daimler Kunstsammlung', mumok, Vienna; 2007 – 'The Artist's Dining Room: Manfred Kuttner, Anselm Reyle, Thomas Scheibitz', Tate Modern, London; 'Sequence 1', Palazzo Grassi, Venice.

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