

Barceló. We Are All Greeks

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Fundació Catalunya La Pedrera is proud to present the work of Miquel Barceló (Felanitx, Mallorca, 1957), one of the most notable figures on the contemporary art scene.

The exhibition at La Pedrera, curated by writer and independent curator Enrique Juncosa, chronologically charts Barceló's artistic career over three decades, from his first works produced in Africa in 1994 to his more recent pieces. The show, which features over 100 pieces, is complemented with paintings and works on paper related to the ceramic exhibits, and also includes a bronze sculpture installed in the Passeig de Gràcia courtyard.

It is the largest retrospective on Miquel Barceló's ceramics to date and has been received with enthusiasm and cooperation from the artist.

Barceló's work is extremely visceral but also deeply thoughtful, incorporating and recreating matter, organic life and time both thematically and physically. The artist himself recognises that he makes no distinction between painting and ceramics, and we can therefore consider his ceramic pieces a sort of extension of his painting. In the artist's own words: "It is the best material for showing defects and imperfections." Barceló has created over four thousand ceramic pieces, which reproduce many of his characteristic themes and motifs, such as botanical and zoological images and shapes, both from the countryside and the sea, or references to great ceramicists such as Picasso and Miró.

Miquel Barceló began showing his work in the late 1970s and soon became highly renowned internationally with the emergence of Neo-expressionism. This recognition has grown over the years and, since then, exhibitions on his work have been held in museums in London, Paris, Rome, Vienna, Tokyo, Boston, Montreal, Mexico City and São Paulo. Barceló is known above all for his paintings, which are large format and rich in textures with images emerging from the viscosity of the material itself. His work is full of cultural references, from cave paintings through to contemporary art.

In the mid-1990s, while in Mali, where he lived for many years, strong winds made it impossible for him to paint because his works ended up covered in dust. So, he decided to try clay. He created a series of pieces in terracotta that kicked off what would become one of the core aspects of his later work. When he returned home, Barceló worked at a ceramic factory, where he developed his own vocabulary in ceramics, decorating traditional pots with fruit, vegetables and fish, and creating sculptures of animals and skulls. Since 2009, Barceló has had a ceramics workshop, which he is currently expanding.

"We are all Greeks" takes its title from English Romantic poet P. B. Shelley, who like Barceló was fascinated by Greek culture. The exhibition features a hundred pieces in chronological order made over three decades. They are a three-dimensional extension of the artist's paintings, as well as allegories on the passage of time.