



museum of arts and design

**AFTER ADAM AND EVE: SCULPTURES BY CHRIS ANTEMANN
EXPLORE LUST AND SEXUALITY IN CERAMIC VIGNETTES INSPIRED
BY THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY**

Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit
September 22, 2016–February 5, 2017



NEW YORK, NY (September 20, 2016) – From September 22, 2016, to February 5, 2017, the Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) presents *Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit*, an installation of 21 porcelain sculptures resulting from the collaboration between Oregon-based artist Chris Antemann and the renowned MEISSEN Porcelain Manufactory in Germany. Invited in 2011 to participate in MEISSEN's art studio program, Antemann worked closely with the manufactory's master artisans to create unique pieces and a series of limited editions that reinvent and reinvigorate the legendary figurative tradition.

Inspired by eighteenth-century porcelain figurines and decorative art, and using the Garden of Eden as her metaphor, Antemann has created a contemporary interpretation of the eighteenth-century banqueting craze, posing scantily clad male and female figures in intimate and playful vignettes of seduction. Antemann's work makes formal references to classic baroque MEISSEN figurines to convey narratives of domesticity, social etiquette, and taboos while reflecting on contemporary morality in a setting that evokes the decadence of François Boucher and Jean-Antoine Watteau.

In the exhibition at MAD, Antemann's delicate and intricately detailed sculptures are lavishly presented on a central banquet table alongside a selection of stand-alone sculptures and the

nine-light porcelain *Lemon Chandelier*, evoking the tradition of palatial porcelain rooms. Her centerpiece, *Love Temple* (2013), is inspired by MEISSEN's great historical model of Johann Joachim Kändler's monumental *Love Temple* (1750) but strips the original design back to its basic forms. Antemann also adds her own figures, ornamentation, and flowers to the five-foot work, as well as a special finial with three musicians to herald the arrival of guests to the banquet of "forbidden fruit" below.

The exhibition features *Lust & Gluttony*, Antemann's first dinner piece and a part of MAD's permanent collection, a work that showcases the artist's unwaveringly high level of detail and her commitment to parodying gender dichotomies. MAD's acquisition of the work, said Antemann, "launched my career and began the trajectory which led to the invitation from MEISSEN." *Lust & Gluttony* differs in its three-part construction from its *Forbidden Fruit Dinner Party* counterpart, which Antemann built in a single piece with the help of her MEISSEN colleagues and their collective knowledge accumulated over 300 years working with porcelain.

"Throughout her career, Antemann has manipulated the purely white and technically challenging material of porcelain to create contemporary interpretations of the pursuits of eighteenth-century elites, such as fine dining and escapades in pleasure gardens," noted Shannon R. Stratton, MAD'S William and Mildred Lasdon Chief Curator. "Her work also references porcelain's own place as a commodity. The preciousness of the material and the femininity of the modeling and decoration in the sculptures are juxtaposed with unabashed eroticism and luxury to create an unexpected satire of human vice in the past and present."

Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit is part of MAD Transformations, a series of six exhibitions presented this fall that address artists who have transformed and continue to transform our perceptions of traditional craft mediums. Building upon the exhibition *Voulkos: The Breakthrough Years*, which celebrates the work of an artist known for drastically changing the way clay is categorized as an art material and as a discipline, the MAD Transformations exhibitions consider fiber, clay, and jewelry and metals—disciplines (along with glass and wood) that form the bedrock of the Museum of Arts and Design's founding mission and collection, and that continue to morph in the hands of contemporary artists today.

EXHIBITION CREDITS

Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit is a traveling exhibition organized by Chris Antemann. The artworks were produced with Antemann by the MEISSEN Porcelain Manufactory in the MEISSEN artCampus. The exhibition was secured for the Museum of Arts and Design by William and Mildred Lasdon Chief Curator Shannon R. Stratton, with the support of Curatorial Assistant and Project Manager Angelik Vizcarrondo-Laboy.

Support for *Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit* is generously provided by Arlene Schnitzer and Jordan Schnitzer, Joan and Alan Safir, Sandra Kissler and Mort Weinstein, Dorothy Saxe, and MEISSEN.

RELATED PROGRAMMING

ENCOUNTERS

An Afternoon with Chris Antemann: Talk, Tour, Demo

Friday, September 23, 2016 – 2:00 to 4:30 pm

Free with Museum Admission

In celebration of the opening of *Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit*, join the artist for an afternoon talk, tour, and demonstration of her creative practice. Antemann's work explores the great eighteenth-century porcelain figurative tradition in a contemporary context, using the Garden of Eden as a metaphor. Her sculptures tell modern stories of desire, exploring narratives of domesticity, social etiquette, and taboo that allude to love, passion, power, and jealousy.

Talk | 2:00 pm

The afternoon starts with a talk by the artist on her influences and process—specifically her creative collaboration with the renowned MEISSEN Porcelain Manufactory, dating back to 2011.

Tour | 2:45 pm

Following the talk, visitors will join Antemann on the fifth floor for a tour of the exhibition. As Antemann highlights key works that illustrate her distinctive style, visitors will gain insight into how she draws from history—both art history and social history—and explore how curatorial choices affect the way objects are seen and interpreted.

Demo | 3:30 pm

Antemann will conclude the afternoon with a live demonstration in the Artist Studios. She will discuss using porcelain as a material and re-create one of her classic figures, a little maid that is on view in the exhibition.

Curator-Led Tour of *Coille Hooven: Tell It By Heart* and *Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit*

Thursday, October 20, 2016 – 6:00 pm

Free with KLM Pay-What-You-Wish Admission

5th floor galleries

Discover the new exhibitions *Coille Hooven: Tell It By Heart* and *Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit* with William and Mildred Lasdon Chief Curator **Shannon R. Stratton** and feminist scholar **Jenni Sorkin** as your guides. These exhibitions showcase more than 30 years of work by Coille Hooven and the recent collaboration between Chris Antemann and MEISSEN to explore the recontextualization of porcelain as a medium to convey domestic-centered narratives.

At the conclusion of the tour, visitors will be invited to join the 6:30 pm curator-led tour of *Voulkos: The Breakthrough Years*, with Windgate Research and Collections Curator **Elissa Auther** and artist **Arlene Shechet**. The tour will be followed by the panel discussion *Voulkos, Then and Now*.

TALK

Talk and Book Signing with Jenni Sorkin: *Pond Farm and the Summer Craft Experience*

Friday, October 21, 2016 – 7:00 pm

\$10 general / \$5 members and students

The Theater at MAD

Jenni Sorkin, Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, will be speaking about the legacy of Bauhaus-trained potter Marguerite Wildenhain (American, b. France, 1896–1985). Drawing on Sorkin's recently published book, *Live Form: Women, Ceramics, and Community*, the talk reframes Wildenhain's legacy within the history of summer craft programs, functional pottery, gender bias, and craft pedagogies. Far from being an isolated field, ceramics as practiced by Wildenhain offered a sense of community and social engagement, which, Sorkin argues, crucially set the stage for later participatory forms of art and feminist collectivism.

The talk will be followed by a book signing of *Live Form: Women, Ceramics, and Community*. This program is organized in conjunction with the exhibitions *Coille Hooven: Tell It By Heart* and *Chris Antemann: Forbidden Fruit*.

Jenni Sorkin, Assistant Professor of Contemporary Art History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, holds a PhD in the History of Art from Yale University. She has written numerous in-depth essays on feminist art and issues of gender. In May 2016, she gave a keynote address, along with Catherine de Zegher, at the international conference “Penetrable / Traversable / Habitable: Exploring spatial environments by women artists in the 1960s and 1970s,” held in Lisbon, Portugal, at the Centro de Arte Moderna, Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian. Most recently, she co-curated, with Paul Schimmel, *Revolution in the Making: Abstract Sculpture by Women, 1947–2016*, the inaugural exhibition at Hauser Wirth & Schimmel, Los Angeles, which ran from May to September 2016. Also in 2016, she published her first book, *Live Form: Women, Ceramics, and Community* (University of Chicago Press), which examines gender and postwar ceramics practice at Black Mountain and other utopian communities.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design (MAD) champions contemporary makers across creative fields and presents the work of artists, designers, and artisans who apply the highest level of ingenuity and skill. Since the Museum’s founding in 1956 by philanthropist and visionary Aileen Osborn Webb, MAD has celebrated all facets of making and the creative processes by which materials are transformed, from traditional techniques to cutting-edge technologies. Today, the Museum’s curatorial program builds upon a rich history of exhibitions that emphasize a cross-disciplinary approach to art and design, and reveals the workmanship behind the objects and environments that shape our everyday lives. MAD provides an international platform for practitioners who are influencing the direction of cultural production and driving twenty-first-century innovation, and fosters a participatory setting for visitors to have direct encounters with skilled making and compelling works of art and design. The Museum will be celebrating its Diamond Jubilee 60th Anniversary this year.

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image caption:
Chris Antemann in collaboration with MEISSEN, *Covet*, 2013. Photo courtesy of MEISSEN.