

ceramic brussels

Guest of Honour of the 3rd edition of ceramic brussels

Elmar Trenkwalder

ceramic brussels, the first international contemporary art fair dedicated to ceramics, is delighted to announce that Austrian artist Elmar Trenkwalder will be celebrated as Guest of Honour from January 21th to 25th, 2026 through a series of initiatives within the fair.

Elmar Trenkwalder, Guest of Honour 2026

Born in 1959 in Weißenbach am Lech, Elmar Trenkwalder lives and works in Innsbruck, Austria. For more than forty years, Trenkwalder has been creating monumental and opulent sculptures, whose ornamental richness recalls Baroque and Rococo architecture, as well as forms inspired by Asia.

“It is an honour for me to be able to present my work at ceramic brussels 2026. This exhibition is a wonderful opportunity to bring together a body of historical and contemporary works and share my artistic approach with an enthusiastic audience.”- E.Trenkwalder -

A large-scale exhibition of some of the artist's most remarkable works will be staged at the entrance of the fair, spanning over 300 m². This monographic exhibition is being organised in collaboration with the artist and Paris-based Galerie Bernard Jordan, which has represented and supported him for more than 25 years.

“The world of Elmar Trenkwalder is absolutely unique in the contemporary art landscape, distinguished by its protean, singular and ornamental sculptural approach. Through this invitation, we are thrilled to present a body of remarkable works within the field of contemporary sculpture, by a major artist whose practice unites drawing, painting and sculpture,” said Gilles Parmentier and Jean-Marc Dimanche, co-directors of the fair.

Elmar Trenkwalder follows American artist Elizabeth Jaeger (Guest of Honour 2025, represented in particular by Galerie Mennour, FR) and Belgian artist Johan Creten (Guest of Honour 2024, represented in particular by Almine Rech, FR, and Transit, BE).

The artist will also take part in a keynote conversation on Thursday 22 January 2026 to open the fair. Conducted by Rafaël Pic, editor-in-chief of Le Quotidien de l'Art, this interview will launch the programme of talks and conferences (to be announced in December 2025).

In addition, a series of works by Elmar Trenkwalder will be on display at the stand of Galerie Bernard Jordan during the fair.

Artist biography

Elmar Trenkwalder was born in 1959 in Weißenbach am Lech and lives and works in Innsbruck, Austria. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna with Max Weiler and Arnulf Rainer (1978–1982). From the outset, he developed an impressive, abundant and fantastical artistic practice, rich in detail and characterised by visual fascination and ambiguity.

For more than four decades, Trenkwalder has produced monumental and opulent sculptures, their ornamental richness recalling Baroque and Rococo architecture as well as Asian forms. His ceramic sculptures demonstrate exceptional technical mastery. Pushing the limits of the medium, he elevates ceramics into a genuine construction material, creating works that combine technical virtuosity with striking visual power.

From the 1990s onwards, Trenkwalder established himself on the international scene. He took part in Aperto 90 at the Venice Biennale (1990, curated by Harald Szeemann) and in the Lyon Biennale (1997). Significant exhibitions followed, such as Austria im Rosennetz at MAK, Vienna, and Wunderkammer Österreich at Kunsthaus Zürich (1996), or Contrepoint at the Louvre Museum (2005). In 2008, La Maison Rouge in Paris also dedicated the exhibition Les inspirés to him, alongside Augustin Lesage.

His work has been featured in major solo exhibitions, including at the Salzburger Rupertinum (2001), Kunsthalle Krems and Gerhard-Marcks-Haus, Bremen (2012), MUDAM Luxembourg (2013), MUba Eugène Leroy, Tourcoing (2014), Kunstraum Dornbirn and Museum der bildenden Künste, Leipzig (2018), and Kunstmuseum Olten (2019). More recently, his monumental sculptures have been shown at Beelden aan Zee Museum, The Hague (2023), Schlossmuseum Linz (2025), and Gmundner Keramik Manufaktur (2025). Elmar Trenkwalder will soon be exhibiting at the Belvedere in Vienna (6 November 2025 – 14 March 2026).

Trenkwalder has received several distinctions throughout his career, including the Vienna City Prize (1991), the Anton Faistauer Prize for Painting (1993), the Salzburg State Ceramic Prize (2004), and the Tyrol State Prize for Contemporary Art (2015).

Today, Elmar Trenkwalder is recognised as one of the leading figures in European contemporary sculpture. His work, both visionary and deeply rooted in art history, forges a singular link between ornament, architecture and spirituality.

ceramic brussels 2026

As a committed, pioneering fair dedicated to promoting ceramics worldwide, ceramic brussels continues to develop its platform in the heart of Brussels and announces an exceptional programme. For its 3rd edition, it will again receive the support of Puilaetco - a Quintet Private Bank, the fair's main partner.

With this new edition, ceramic brussels 2026 reaffirms its mission: to celebrate the diversity of modern and contemporary ceramics, support emerging artistic talent and foster dialogue between artists, institutions and galleries.

This edition will bring together more than 70 exhibitors and will feature several highlights, including:

- A focus on Spain, country of honour as part of EUROPALIA ESPAÑA, showcasing the richness and diversity of the Spanish ceramic scene through a selection of Spanish galleries, a programme of talks and encounters, and the participation of artists and institutional representatives.

S O P H I E C A R R E E

- A group exhibition of the ten laureates of the ceramic brussels art prize, underlining the fair's commitment to emerging creation.
- A programme of talks and professional meetings, serving as a genuine platform for exchange and dialogue.
- An exhibition pass giving free access to a selection of partners exhibitions.
- Further initiatives that will enrich an ambitious and diverse programme.

Dates & opening Hours

21 January 2026 – VIP Preview

By invitation only – 2 pm to 9 pm

22 to 25 January 2026 – Public Days

Thursday – Friday – Saturday: 11 am – 7 pm – entry: €20

Sunday: 11 am – 6 pm – entry: €20

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