

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Powerhouse Arts Presents a Cross-Generational Dialogue in Ceramic Practice at Ceramic Art Fair Paris

The Brooklyn-based not-for-profit presents works by the late Al Held, Lauren Shapiro, and collaborators Nicolas Touron & Amy Lemaire, on view October 20–25, 2026 at Maison de l'Amérique Latine, 7th Arrondissement, Paris, Booth B.17.



Al Held in his West Broadway studio, c. 1986. Photo: Feliciano. Courtesy Al Held Foundation. Lauren Shapiro, 2025. Photo: Pedro Wazzan. Nicolas Touron using 3D printing to create a modular stoneware component with the PotterBot. Photo courtesy of Powerhouse Arts; Sam Polcer.

The Presentation

Brooklyn, New York (October 9, 2026) – Powerhouse Arts presents a cross-generational dialogue in ceramic practice, bringing together works by the late **Al Held**, and contemporary artists **Nicolas Touron/Amy Lemaire**, and **Lauren Shapiro** to examine the evolving relationship between materiality, technology, and artistic expression. Spanning disciplines and methodologies, the presentation reflects PHA's commitment to fostering experimentation across traditional and emerging modes of making.

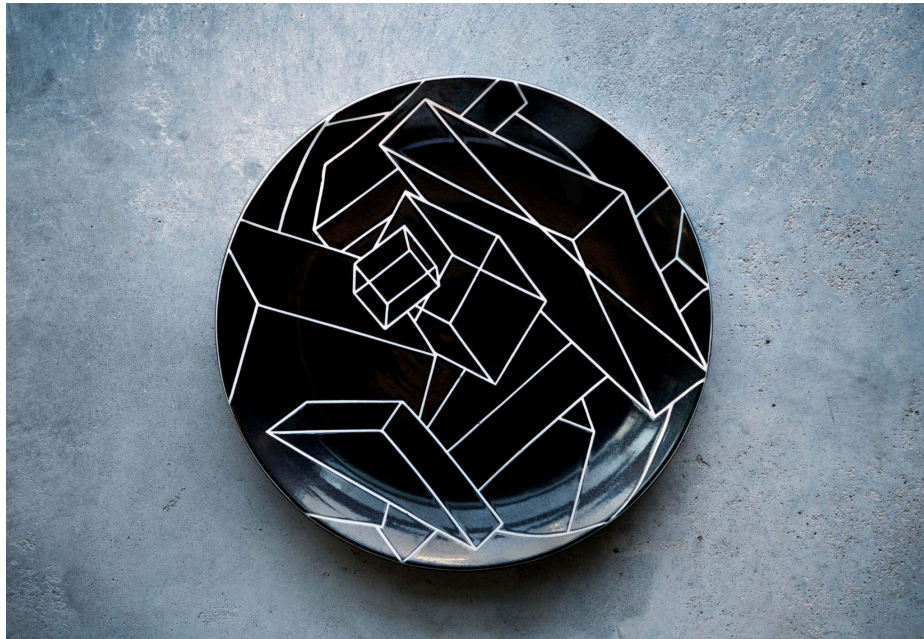
At its center is a simple aim: amplifying and empowering artmaking in its myriad capacities.

Ceramic Art Fair, with its commitment to the mediums of ceramics and glass, is an appropriate destination for these works. PHA has a robust ceramics program that includes material capabilities beyond those traditionally found at arts fabrication studios, among them a hydraulic RAM press, monumental-scale electric and gas kilns, and a 3D-printing PotterBot. The booth showcases unique practices, each utilizing the technological and collaborative resources of PHA to produce highly innovative works that push the boundary of the traditional definition of ceramics.

Together, these artists and projects reveal ceramics as a site of convergence: where analog and digital processes intersect, where geometry and organic form coexist, and where centuries-old techniques are continuously reimagined through contemporary technologies. In juxtaposing Held's precise abstractions with the speculative, biomorphic, architectural worldviews of Touron/Lemaire and Shapiro, the presentation underscores the expansive possibilities of clay and glass.

The Artists

Al Held Foundation



Glazed porcelain plate by the Al Held Foundation. Fabricated by Powerhouse Arts. Photography by Xavier Petromelis.

Al Held (1928 – 2005) is widely regarded as one of the most ambitious American artists of the twentieth century. He continuously pushed abstraction toward increasing spatial and formal complexity. Best known as a painter, Held also worked in a wide range of media including drawing, watercolor, printmaking, and public commissions in stained glass and ceramic mosaic. During a residency at the University of Wisconsin – Madison in 1971, Held designed a series of unique plates, rendering his iconic hard-edge, black-and-white geometric language in glaze and clay objects fabricated by ceramicist Bruce Breckenridge.

When the **Al Held Foundation** and Powerhouse Arts decided to partner on a project, the Foundation naturally selected one of Held's plates to become a "first" for both organizations: the first posthumous Held edition and the first collaboration between Powerhouse and an artist's estate/foundation. The vision was to preserve the integrity of Held's original design, which powerfully translated his monumental visual vocabulary into ceramic form, into a high quality, hand-made edition of 30. The Powerhouse team used contemporary digital technologies and traditional resist techniques to reverse-engineer Held's fine lines and crisp edges in a sumptuously glazed porcelain plate. This new edition demonstrates how geometry can move fluidly between painting and object-making while retaining its conceptual rigor.

"Al Held always admired the color-fast quality of ceramics and dreamed of creating a mural with the integrity of Babylonian glazed-brick walls. In 1971, he rescaled the dynamic geometric imagery of his monumental Black and White paintings into a series of unique plates. Fifty-five years later, the extraordinarily talented team at Powerhouse Arts has reanimated Held's vision in a new edition for a contemporary audience. Held lived with his plates and now others can enjoy a taste of his epic abstraction in their own homes."

— Daniel Belasco, Executive Director of the Al Held Foundation

Lauren Shapiro



Lauren Shapiro, Garden Lantern, 2024. Courtesy of the Artist. Photo: Pat Garcia.

Lauren Shapiro is a Miami-based ceramicist and explorer whose work uses clay, glass, and technology to document and preserve the natural world. Her sculptures trace the history of our natural ecosystem and both caution against the accelerated progression of climate change and galvanize education, awareness, and conservation of the environment.

Shapiro often collaborates with scientists on expeditions into South Florida's ecosystems, including snorkeling through coastal reefs and foraging in the Everglades to gather coral and botanical specimens. Utilizing photogrammetry and 3D scanning technologies, she captures fragile natural textures in marine and botanical environments that comprise an extensive, ever-growing "database" to be transformed into molds and serialized across her sculptural forms. Her vessel-like sculptures and wallworks frequently incorporate geometric and crystalline elements derived from hand-developed origami studies, creating a striking dialogue between organic patterns and constructed form. Shapiro positions ceramics not only as a medium of preservation, but also as a vehicle for collective reflection on ecological resilience and sustainability.

Shapiro's relationship with Powerhouse Arts began early in the organization's development, when she spent time as a Fellow working in the Ceramics Shop. That early connection has since grown alongside her practice, as her work has scaled into larger, more architecturally ambitious sculptures produced in close collaboration with the team at PHA. The organization's combination of traditional ceramics and advanced digital tools supports a practice built on the constant translation between organic specimen and constructed object.

"Working at the intersection of traditional craftsmanship and emerging technologies, my hybrid forms act as contemporary reliquaries—preserving fragile ecological narratives and prompting reflection on human impact and environmental change."

— Lauren Shapiro

Nicolas Touron/Amy Lemaire



Detailed view of "Age of Aquarius" porcelain and borosilicate. Exhibition by Amy Lemaire & Nicolas Touron at Sarah Crown, New York (March 21 – April 19, 2025).

Nicolas Tournon is a French-born, New York-based sculptor whose work sits at the intersection of ancient ceramic tradition and digital fabrication. Trained at the Rietveld Academy after being a chef in a Michelin-starred kitchen, Tournon approaches sculpture the way he once approached cooking — building modular "recipes" of individual components that combine into larger compositions.

His fantastical sculptures begin as digitally modeled forms executed through 3D ceramic printing, a process that merges contemporary fabrication technologies with one of humanity's oldest ceramic traditions: coil building. Layered with found objects, glazes, and hand-rendered embellishments, his works occupy a liminal space between the synthetic and organic, the futuristic and the ancient. Narrative-driven and continuously evolving, Tournon's sculptures suggest worlds in flux: living embodiments of storytelling itself.

Rather than treat 3D printing as a tool for precision and predictability, Tournon deliberately courts uncertainty: he pushes his printers past their intended limits, runs prints for eight to ten hours at a stretch, and lets the friction between machine, material, and chance shape the final form. Tournon is often applauded for his mastery of 3D clay printing and his transformative use of the medium. He has shared his expertise across various fellowship programs, including at Harvard and PHA.

Central to this practice is Tournon's ongoing relationship with Powerhouse Arts, where he is a Fellow and produces his work using the organization's 3D PotterBot and Lutum clay printers. Powerhouse gives Tournon access to the scale, machinery, and technical infrastructure his large, multi-part sculptures demand — from testing extrusion rates and nozzle sizes to assembling, glazing, and firing finished pieces on-site. At the Ceramic Art Fair, Tournon will be showcasing works created in collaboration with Glass artist Amy Lemaire. Their sculptural works reconsider nature from a post-anthropocene perspective, combining stoneware or porcelain with borosilicate glass.

"Producing naïve yet highly intricate forms through digital tools—technologies often associated with coldness, precision, and calculation—presented an especially compelling contrast."

— Nicolas Tournon

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About Powerhouse Arts

Powerhouse Arts (PHA) is a not-for-profit creative production center in Gowanus, Brooklyn. PHA brings artists, fabricators, educators, and neighbors together and connects them to the tools, spaces, and support they need to sustain their creative practices.

In PHA's purpose-built facility, an extended network of art and fabrication professionals and educators co-create, teach, and share practices vital to the wellbeing of artists and the communities to which they belong. The organization envisions a society where creative expression is celebrated as central to personal and civic life.

PHA offers fee-based fabrication services in Ceramics, Print (including screenprinting and digital print services) and Public Art, and is home to The Alpha Workshops, which produces handmade wallpaper and handwoven/hand-dyed textiles, and Workspace11, which specializes in architectural and design metalwork. The organization's in-house production facilities and expert fabrication teams help artists produce work in a safe environment, in a more collaborative, creative and cost-effective way than typical studio buildings can accommodate.

The Community Ceramics Studio and MGC Community Print Studio offer artists access to workspace, materials, equipment, and professional assistance. PHA is a place where artists can realize projects, find community, and grow opportunities to sustain creative lives, with community members partnering and learning through in-person events and gatherings, art-making and skill-building workshops and classes, work-based learning programs, an Artist Subsidy Program, and an Artist-in-Residence Program.

The organization's educational approach investigates different ways of making, engages participants in cross-material and technical exploration, and supports the actualization of their artistic projects from ideation to completion.

The PHA Store is an on-site gallery showcasing and offering for acquisition select works from the Print and Ceramic Publishing Programs, and other works from our broad community of artists, makers, and educators.

PHA has activated the impressive gathering spaces of its Herzog & de Meuron–designed facility with an expanding schedule of public exhibitions, art fairs, performances, screenings, and talks.

The spirit of artistic production, labor, and creative expression speaks directly to the ethos of Powerhouse Arts. For more information, please visit powerhousearts.org or follow on Instagram at [@powerhouse_arts](https://www.instagram.com/powerhouse_arts).

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