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Kristina Riska's Life-Sized Ceramics in New York

Nordic News

For over 30 years Kristina Riska has been pushing the boundaries of what is possible with clay. Her latest sculptures are on display in New York

Text by Lara Chapman
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Kristina Riska has been re-defining the practice of ceramic sculpture since the 1980s. Throughout her career, the Finnish artist has developed something of a trademark with her large-scale works that are made possible by her physical and rigorous approach to the material possibilities of clay. Displaying these monumental and hand-shaped sculptures is New York gallery, [Hostler Burrows](#) in Kristina Riska's second solo show in the city.

The works on display contain many hints as to how they were made. If one peers into the vessel-like sculptures, subtle rings line the inside surfaces. These are evidence of the hand-coiling technique that the artist often uses. They allow structural integrity to pieces that seem impossibly large and fragile. Furthermore, the shapes and traces of left behind by Riska's fingers may be glimpsed here. The slightly asymmetrical shapes and fluid curves of the pieces alongside their detailed textured surfaces suggest an organic construction that relies on the eye of the artist and the negotiations she undertakes with her chosen material of clay. Riska works from drawings initially, however, these evolve as the works come to life with a kind of tacit thinking that is triggered through the making process. The soft and natural color palette of the glazes seem to reference the natural sources of the material itself whilst putting the focus on the forms it makes possible.

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Riska created this most recent collection of works during a spring/summer 2018 residency at KHiO, the Oslo National Academy of the Arts, Norway. The life-sized sculptures were a direct result of the access this residency provided to the academy's oversized kilns.

Kristina Riska's solo exhibition will be on display until December 14.

