

# THE CHAPEL OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT IN MALLORCA CATHEDRAL

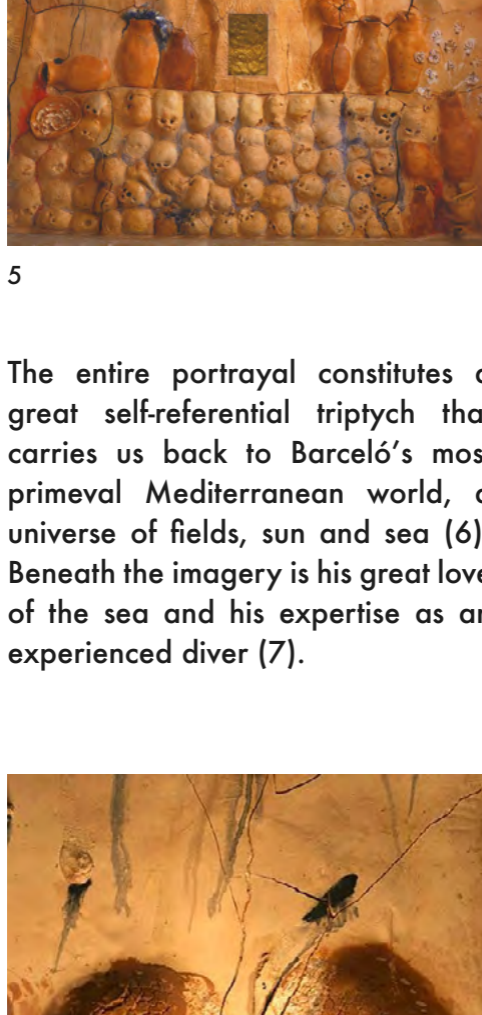
In 2002 Barceló was entrusted with the restoration of the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament in the Cathedral of Mallorca.

The result is a comprehensive work that has completely transformed the chapel, cladding it with a ceramic 'skin' and stained-glass windows that innovatively allow the light to filter inside. This is one of Barceló's finest achievements in the field of ceramics, while at the same time bearing witness to the artist's ambition and original approach (1).



1

Iconographically, the chapel tells two biblical stories of miracles, the five loaves and two fish (2,3), and the changing of water into wine (4), with a central figure representing Jesus Christ in an image that is both mystical and directly associated with the creative artist in his studio (5).



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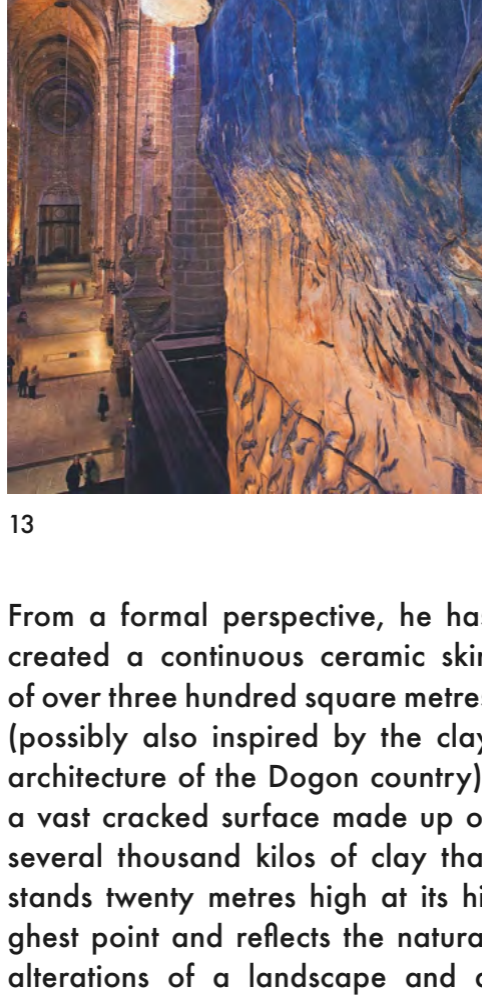


5

The entire portrayal constitutes a great self-referential triptych that carries us back to Barceló's most primeval Mediterranean world, a universe of fields, sun and sea (6). Beneath the imagery is his great love of the sea and his expertise as an experienced diver (7).

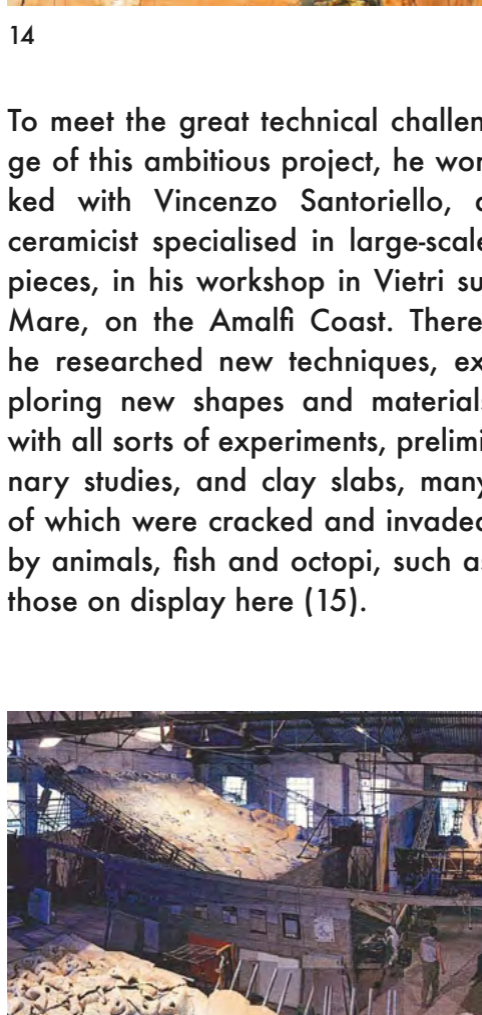


6



7

The artist created this work in Italy, drawing inspiration from the Mediterranean Sea. He captures the hidden realm of the sea floor on the mural (8,9,10,11), using the great height of his clay walls to install shoals of fish overhead, to convey the sensation of being immersed in the underwater world (12).



8



9



10



11



12

The sea floor of the large ceramic fresco evokes a silence, which, together with the atmosphere created by the large stained-glass windows, summons us to retreat and prayer in this sacred space (13).



13

From a formal perspective, he has created a continuous ceramic skin of over three hundred square metres (possibly also inspired by the clay architecture of the Dogon country): a vast cracked surface made up of several thousand kilos of clay that stands twenty metres high at its highest point and reflects the natural alterations of a landscape and a submerged seascape (14).



14

To meet the great technical challenge of this ambitious project, he worked with Vincenzo Santoriello, a ceramicist specialised in large-scale pieces, in his workshop in Vietri sul Mare, on the Amalfi Coast. There, he researched new techniques, exploring new shapes and materials with all sorts of experiments, preliminary studies, and clay slabs, many of which were cracked and invaded by animals, fish and octopi, such as those on display here (15).



15

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