

HOSTLER BURROWS

Gunnar Nylund (1904-1997) was a Danish ceramist active both in Sweden and Denmark. Nylund worked across multiple media, including glass and metal, but he is well known for the industrial tableware, unique sculptures in chamotte and his specially developed glazes that he produced throughout his career at Rörstrand Potteries, where he was the artistic director.

Nylund was born in Paris in 1904, and lived across Scandinavia from 1907 onwards. His mother was a Danish ceramist and his father a Finnish painter and sculptor, which certainly informed Nylund's choice of occupation. In his youth, Nylund would often assist his parents with their projects, and in 1923, Nylund pursued studying in Helsinki both in the fields of architecture and ceramic art. Later, he pursued further studies in architecture at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen.

Since there were few opportunities in the field of architecture after the First World War, Nylund applied to work as a ceramist at Bing and Gröndahl, a porcelain manufactory in Copenhagen. Nylund worked there from 1925-1928, when he left in order to establish his own workshop together with his colleague Nathalie Krebs. At Nylund & Krebs Kermaiske Vaerksted, which would later be called Saxbo, Krebs, a chemist, managed the development of glazes and firing, and Nylund was responsible for designing and modeling forms. Together, they exhibited their experimental works in 1930 at Svenskt Tenn in Stockholm to great success.

Nylund was discovered by Rörstrand Potteries as a result of the positive critical acclaim that the Svenskt Tenn exhibition garnered, and he was offered a position there. Nylund remained at Rörstrand from 1931-1955, serving as their artistic director for the majority of his career.

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At Rörstrand, Nylund developed his innovative matte feldspar glazes, which were popularized by renowned ceramists Berndt Friberg and Carl-Harry Stålhane. He produced both unique figural sculptures and service ware in the modernist style throughout the 1930s, using rich glazes and rough chamotte. After World War II, Nylund moved towards a more abstracted style. Nylund's oeuvre reflects that while he never limited himself to any one glaze or material, he consistently maintained a simultaneous attentiveness to craftsmanship as well as aesthetic beauty, even with his utilitarian products.

In 1955, Nylund became the artistic director at Strömbergshyttans glassworks in Sweden. In 1959 Nylund returned to Denmark to work at Nymölle Potteries as their artistic director, and later free-lanced for Rörstrand and Strömbergshyttan. Nylund's final project was to establish his own studio in Malmö, which he called Designia, where he concentrating on glass design and metalwork sculpture.

MUSEUMS

V&A Museum, London
Nationalmuseum, Stockholm
Röhsska Museet, Gothenburg
Malmö Art Museum, Sweden
Designmuseum, Copenhagen

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