

## Limoges, FRANCE

### The Foundation Bettencourt Schueller Awarded the “Aotsugi Innovative Project” Developed in the Framework of Limoges UNESCO Designation as a Creative City



The Foundation Bettencourt Schueller is a family public-interest foundation having chosen to “develop talents to the top” and contributing to France’s success and influence. To make it possible the foundation seeks, selects, supports and promotes women and men who are rethinking future. Life sciences, arts and inclusive society are the three related fields to generate tangible difference to the common good. Moreover, in a philanthropic mindset, the Foundation Bettencourt Schueller aims at taking action through prizes, donations, co-creating initiatives, etc. Created in 1999, the Liliane Bettencourt Prize for the “Intelligence of the Hand” honors expertise, creativity and innovation in the field of craftsmanship. This prize has become a label of excellence of French craftsmanship and contributes to its influence and fervor. The Liliane Bettencourt Prize includes three distinct exceptional awards: talents of exception, dialogues and itinerary. The one called “Dialogues”

focuses on a craftsman and designer’s collaboration that has created a nearly completed prototype or an object which exemplifies excellent quality of handcrafted expertise and design creativity. It is the perfect innovative mix between expertise and imagination. In 2021, the Liliane Bettencourt Prize for the “Intelligence of the Hand—Dialogues” was awarded to Mr. Grégory Rosenblat from the porcelain manufactory in Limoges named Pierre Arquié, and to the two designers Mr. Nicolas Lelièvre and Mr. Florian Brillet for their unique and creative work called Aotsugi. Inspired by the Japanese Kintsugi art process using gold to fix any porcelain objects, the Aotsugi project, which was developed in the framework of Limoges UNESCO designation as a worldwide creative city, consists of repairing the public space with the most prestigious and technically complicated porcelain: “Le bleu de four” (translated: Blue from oven and looking as a dark blue enameled porcelain). As the main part of the fine arts strategic plan to make craft as an innovative and economical asset of the City of Limoges, the Aotsugi project has been developed through the first city of Limoges’ artistic public procurement and supported by the French Regional Agency of Cultural Affairs. “This beautiful project blending





culture, urbanism and creativity, lets ceramics entering into the public space” explains Vincent Léonie, the deputy mayor of Limoges in charge of Urbanism. He adds: “The Aotsugi project is a 4 km urban circuit throughout the city center of Limoges exposing 17 permanent pieces of porcelain. The locations of each ceramic items were chosen due to a lack of urban pieces such as a gutter, cobblestones, antique vases that have disappeared over time or destroyed. Some are discreet and others set up in obvious or improbable places. Everything is done to lead people to look at the city differently. Nicolas Lelièvre, Florian Brillet and Grégory Rosenblat have brilliantly sublimated ceramics and revealed it to the public around the town.” Through their candidature, the two designers and the porcelain manufacturer were expecting to distinguish themselves with their unique approach of spreading the local porcelain expertise all over the city. More than a work not constituting a compulsory urban circuit nor delivering any specific messages, the Aotsugi project is a one-shot invitation to look at the city in a different way.

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