

CRAFTER

Crafting Europe in the Bronze Age and Today

. El Argar . Únětice . Füzesabony . Vatin .



CRAFTER: Reviving Bronze Age Pottery in EU-funded Project

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Common to several societies of Bronze Age Europe was the manufacture of burnished drinking vessels and other high-quality tableware (e.g. Dietler 1996: 106), which became central to new ways of commensality. Commensality or ‘table-sharing’, is well in line with the goal of sharing common spaces and values which characterises the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH). A project named *Crafting Europe in the Bronze Age and Today* (CRAFTER) which will draw inspiration from Europe’s Bronze Age pottery to help revive modern-day artisanship.

CRAFTER arises in the framework of Creative Europe, which focuses on projects aimed at making cultural heritage a source of inspiration for contemporary creation and innovation. Two reasons, equally in line with the aims of the 2018 EYCH, justify the focus of CRAFTER on pottery: first, it is endangered as a skill and trade; second, pottery is a wealthy source of archaeological, historical, aesthetic and scientific values.

CRAFTER started in July 2018 and will be implemented until December 2019 by a partnership of eight organisations from five European countries. At the head is the Asociación de Amigos del Yacimiento de La Bastida (ASBA), i.e. “Friends Association of the Archaeological Site of La Bastida”. ASBA is a non-profit organisation from Totana (Spain), a locality known as “City of Potters”, and is devoted to the dissemination and protection of the Early Bronze site of La Bastida.

The first event is an international meeting between potters, archaeologists and other cultural heritage professionals. They will share knowledge, perspectives and experiences, with the goal of generating a set of skills and strategies that will assist potters in recreating ceramic vessels of the four Bronze Age societies of Europe: El Argar (south-eastern Spain), Únětice (Central Europe), Füzesabony (eastern Hungary) and Vatin (south Serbia) that inspire CRAFTER. The event takes place at the City Museum of Mula (Spain) in autumn 2018.

This meeting will propel the second stage, in which the four potters from Spain, Germany, Hungary and Serbia will draw on their skills and experience to (re)create ceramic vessels representative of some of the four Bronze Age societies.

The third line of action is parallel to the second, as it will consist of capturing the process of recreating the Bronze Age ceramic vessels in four documentary films. Visual arts, didactics, and storytelling will be combined in order to show the revival of an ancient craft. The results of the three actions described thus far - shared knowledge, pottery recreations and films - will be shared with the public in the fourth event. The fifth major goal of CRAFTER is to turn the experiences acquired by the potters in the context of the project into an opportunity to revive their trade.

Bibliography

Dietler, M. 1996. Feasts and commensal politics in the political economy: food, power, and status in prehistoric Europe.

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