



PLATES, BOWLS AND DISHES IN A SYMPHONY OF PINK, YELLOW, ORANGE AND GREEN FROM THE COLLECTION (ARTISTIC DIRECTION: LES GRAPHIQUANTS; PHOTO: SEBASTIAN LAGER).

What does music have to do with a pretty 33-piece kaolin white porcelain table service? Everything, as per Charlotte Macaux Perelman and Alexis Fabry, artistic directors of Hermès Maison. Under their direction, Irish artist Nigel Peake created the art for the new collection of plates, trays, tart platters, soup spoons, soy bowls and so much more.

FOR FINER DINING, **HERMÈS EN CONTREPOINT** IS THE MAISON'S LATEST PORCELAIN SERVICE, WITH ART BY NIGEL PEAKE.

/ TEXT: AKANKSHA KAMATH

"It's just how I like to draw—with music," says Peake. "It's not intentional... I also collected old vinyl records before it became cool," the artist quips at the launch of the new collection in Paris this January. The creative trio, who worked together on the A Walk in the Garden collection in 2018, reunited three years ago to work on Hermès En Contrepoint, the new porcelain service from the maison. Initially inspired by cartography, the project took a surprising turn when Peake began sketching in the margins of maritime maps. The borders of colourful ink drawings that framed the maps like a meticulous doodle became the highlight. "The borders around the maps were fascinating—they represented scale, rhythm and tempo," explains Macaux Perelman. These playful margins, an improvisation at first, became the heart of the collection.

"This collection elevates Nigel's work as a colourist," explains Fabry. "There is something very precise and regular in the way he works. It is a pattern and yet he has managed to imbue it with some kind of poetry." Light and airy, each plate, platter, tray and tea cup is unique with friezes of circles, squares and diamonds in hues



SCENOGRAPHY FROM THE LAUNCH EVENT AT THE CONSERVATOIRE NATIONAL DES ARTS ET MÉTIERS, A FORMER ABBEY IN PARIS' THIRD ARRONDISSEMENT (PHOTO: MAXIME VERRET).

of pink, violet, blue, green and orange. During the launch, a choreographed dance showcased how each plate would find its match in a different pairing—where pink merges with green and orange with blue, creating a colour wheel with limitless combinations. “It’s like a game, or a puzzle,” says Macaux Perelman. “The pieces come together in different permutations, much like an orchestra where every note has its place.”

Even with the precision, the human touch is ever-present. “Despite it being made to the perfect Hermès standards, there are variabilities that show you it is artisanal work,” explains Fabry. The interplay between the pieces and the hands, as they work through the entire collection, creates an intimacy that feels timeless. “I love the idea that a granny would cherish this, and so would someone younger. Objects like these outlive us,” says Peake.

The launch of the collection at the National Conservatory of Arts and Crafts in Paris—an evocative space with an old-world charm—was a deliberate choice to emphasise its universal appeal. “It can feel at home anywhere,” Macaux Perelman affirms. Perhaps that is its most enduring charm—an invitation to cherish a zesty accessory at mealtimes for now and for time to come. ▲

