



Inv. no. MK 11

NIELS HANSEN JACOBSEN (1861–1941)  
JAR, UNDATED  
GLAZED STONEWARE

H: 14 CM

Niels Hansen Jacobsen mixed his clay with stone, glass and metal to bring out a sense of crystalline or flashing metal ores in the material – and in the often-viscous glazes that complemented and completed the form.<sup>1</sup> This jar is evocative of a lava-like mass running down the form, which in itself looks like something found in the wild, shaped by nature, as if it had been taken straight out of the heart of a mountain. There is a remarkably tactile, physical and dynamic quality to this jar, which, like so many of the artist's ceramic works, is neither named nor dated.

Niels Hansen Jacobsen's distinct use of bold material effects in his ceramics has built his reputation as the great alchemist of his time.<sup>2</sup> Today, it is difficult to reach a full understanding of the technical aspects of his consistently unique and highly radical ceramic endeavours, partly because the majority of his recipes were burnt shortly before his death in 1941 and partly because his methods were

far from traditional. Over time, several attempts have been made to learn more about Niels Hansen Jacobsen's methods, and in recent years, art historians as well as ceramists and other professionals have striven to decode his materials and glazes.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Niels Th. Mortensen: Billedhuggeren Niels Hansen Jacobsen, Odense 1945, p. 52.*

<sup>2</sup> *Peder Rasmussen: Keramikens sprog, København 2021, p. 96.*

<sup>3</sup> *In 2022, the Vejen Art Museum launched a project called ALKYMISTISK TRÆF, where twelve of Denmark's foremost ceramicists were invited to try to crack the code of how Niels Hansen Jacobsen's unique stoneware was created. Their work and discoveries have prompted workshops, a book and an exhibition in connection with Vejen Art Museum's 100th anniversary in 2024.*