cera.LAB

CODITIONS OF FORMS - by ceraLAB for Paris Design Week 2026

For Paris Design Week, cera.LAB presents a cross-section of its ongoing research into digital ceramics.

The presentation includes a mirror, a vase, and a sculptural object—each produced through custom-built ceramic 3D-printing systems developed in-house. These tools are treated not as industrial machines, but as extensions of the hand, allowing variation, sensitivity, and intention to remain present in the making process.

The works are connected through process rather than typology. They emerge from a continuous exchange between algorithm and material behaviour, where precision and accident coexist.

The mirror reflects not only its surroundings, but the imperfections of its own making. The vase holds and channels form through controlled variation. The sculpture removes functional reference entirely, exposing structure, rhythm, and process as the subject itself.

Together, they offer an overview of cera.LAB's practice: a space where digital systems do not flatten material expression, but allow it to diverge.

Studio Statement

cera.LAB is a design studio at the intersection of digital experimentation and material craft.

Founded in 2023 in Innsbruck, Austria, the studio investigates how technology can echo the intimacy of handmade work—without sacrificing identity, sustainability, or form.

Specializing in ceramics, cera.LAB develops custom 3D-printing tools that act less like machines and more like digital extensions of the hand. Each tool is designed in-house, allowing for nuance, variation, and intent—just as a traditional artisan might. The result is a body of work where no two pieces are alike, yet all speak the same language.

Technology is approached not as a replacement for craft, but as a continuation of it. Through an ongoing dialogue between clay and code, algorithm and accident, cera.LAB explores how digital processes can remain rooted in materiality while opening new possibilities for form and expression.

Working through small-batch production, the studio develops objects that sit between precision and unpredictability, embracing the unique qualities that emerge when digital systems meet natural materials.

Founder's Statement

I am driven by process. By slowness. By curiosity.

The forms emerge from an ongoing dialogue between clay and code, algorithm and accident. Through small-batch production, I explore what digital craft can become—rooted in material, yet shaped by the unknown.

I see technology as an extension of craft—an opportunity to create pieces that are both contemporary and deeply rooted in tradition.

About the Work

At the core of cera.LAB is the development of custom ceramic 3D-printing tools. Rather than relying on standardized technologies, the studio designs and builds its own systems, allowing the making process itself to become a form of research.

These tools are developed to respond to the behaviour of clay, embracing variation rather than eliminating it. Small shifts in material, movement, moisture, or timing become part of the final object.

The resulting works are neither entirely handmade nor entirely machine-made. They occupy a space between the two—where digital precision meets material unpredictability, and where technology remains connected to the human hand.

Biography

Jan Contala

Jan Contala is an architectural designer and researcher working at the forefront of digital ceramics. With a background in architecture, he brings spatial thinking and material sensitivity to the creation of experimental ceramic forms.

Based in Innsbruck, Austria, he founded cera.LAB in 2023 to explore the evolving dialogue between craft and machine. His work combines computational design with custom fabrication techniques, reimagining clay as a medium shaped by code, precision, and process.

Through ongoing material research and hands-on experimentation, he challenges conventional boundaries between designer, artisan, and machine, positioning ceramics as a contemporary language of digital expression.



Key Information

Studio / Founder
cera.LAB / Jan Contala

Location / Founded
Innsbruck, Austria / 2023

Focus
Digital Ceramics / Computational Design / Material Research / Custom Fabrication

Website
cera.LAB Website

Instagram / Contact
@cera.lab / jan@cera-lab.com