

CORVI-MORA

John Lindell

07.09.22 – 06.10.22

Opening: Wednesday 07.09.2022 – 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM

Tommaso Corvi-Mora is thrilled to present the gallery's first exhibition of work by U.S. artist John Lindell. The exhibition will include work from the Nineties as well as new ceramics.

John Lindell travelled across Europe and Asia in the early Eighties then returned to New York City in 1985, where he started making the work he became known for: using a set of symbols he devised – stylized depictions of male erogenous zones – he would combine them in abstract-looking diagrams, which in effect described scenes of gay sex without showing specific bodies or language. Work from this series will be included in the exhibition.

In 1987 John Lindell joined Act Up, a political activist group working to raise consciousness about the AIDS crisis. He was one of the founders of Gran Fury, an AIDS activist artist collective working in public spaces. His art had a different dimension distinct from his work as an activist. As he explained in 1994: "What is crucial about this work is that it isn't about gay identity but about homosexual identity and the difference between the two. (...) Homosexual is a clinical term; gay implies some political or social self-consciousness. I can picture a lot of men who have sex with other men but aren't gay, who think about homosexual acts but have never experienced them, or only act on their impulses occasionally, maybe for a brief period in their lives. (...) I want to promote the idea that their thoughts and feelings are useful for unsettling fixed identities. (...)".¹

The same spirit that permeates his work from the Eighties and Nineties – which prefigures the current emphasis on sexual fluidity – informs the sculpture work he embarked on years later. In 2013 John Lindell started working with clay, developing the work he is making today: vessel-like sculptures with shapes that remind those of male bodies and orifices while echoing the symbols in the earlier drawings.

His ceramics can be viewed as vessels with a potential for function, with a dimension of the everyday and the domestic, while at the same time carrying a subversive message because of their shapes. As vessels, the interior space is as important as the surface, much like the human body. Unlike the earlier symbol drawings, the sculptures are haptic experiences. Vessels, like bodies, want to be held.

The exhibition will present an overview of John Lindell's practice, highlighting its ongoing concerns and preoccupations.

¹John Lindell: "Art After Stonewall: 12 Artists Interviewed". Art in America, June 1994, p. 62-23

The gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday, 11 am to 6 pm.

For further information or photographic documentation please call 020 7840 9111 or email tcm@corvi-mora.com