

NICELLE BEAUCHENE GALLERY

Jonathan Baldock

Masque

March 5 – April 3, 2021

Nicelle Beauchene Gallery is excited to present *Masque*, a project with British artist Jonathan Baldock. This will be the gallery's inaugural project in the downstairs viewing rooms at 7 Franklin Place.

Masque comprises twelve ceramic masks, approximately 13 x 9 inches each, hung in a single line around the room. This new series continues Baldock's interest in the mask as a tool of performance, comedy, and concealment. Bridging the sacred and profane, the masks embody the masquerade and hyperbole of self-identification and self-representation. Baldock explodes and abstracts the features on each "face": the orange *Masque IX* spits out gray disks for its eyes, nose, and mouth, while small clay spheres denote minimal features upon the pink folds of *Masque III*. Cast puckered lips and an ear protrude from *Masque X*, revealing the presence of the artist's own body within the work.

Baldock's practice—encompassing sculpture, installation, and performance—has long contended with the body's implicit tensions and the affect borne out of its performed representations. Through labor-intensive processes that reject traditional value distinctions between high and low, the artist constructs worlds with a distinct visual language deeply rooted in vernacular histories of craft, theater, folklore and ritual. This is the first presentation of Baldock's ceramic masks in the United States, after exhibitions of earlier series at Stephen Friedman Gallery and Camden Arts Centre in London, UK.

Jonathan Baldock (b. 1980, Pembury, UK) lives and works in London. Forthcoming solo projects include presentations at Accelerator, Stockholm, and La Casa Encendida, Madrid (both 2021), and Nicelle Beauchene Gallery, New York (2022). Recent solo exhibitions include Kunsthall Stavanger, Norway (2020); Stephen Friedman Gallery, London (2020 & 2019); Camden Arts Centre, London (2019), which then toured to Tramway, Glasgow (2019) and Bluecoat, Liverpool (2020); De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill (2017); Southwark Park Galleries, London (2017); Chapter Gallery, Cardiff, Wales (2016); and Nicelle Beauchene Gallery (2016). Recent group exhibitions include Towner International, Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne (2020); Assembly Point, London (2019); The Aldrich Contemporary, Ridgefield, CT (2018); Fondazione Memmo, Rome (2016); and Rockbund Art Museum, Shanghai (2013), among others. Baldock's work recently entered the Arts Council Collection, UK.