

House of Seiko

3109 22nd Street,
San Francisco, CA

cole@houseofseiko.info
houseofseiko.info



Nik Gelormino

Sun Path

April 20 - June 2, 2024

We are thrilled to announce the debut solo exhibition, Sun Path, featuring new works by Los Angeles-based sculptor Nik Gelormino. Nik Gelormino (b. 1986, San Francisco) lives and works in Los Angeles. He received his BFA from Cooper Union, New York in 2008. Nik has been featured in numerous group shows including Office Baroque, Belgium; Night Gallery, Los Angeles; Bel Ami, Los Angeles; Arturo Bandini, Los Angeles; Sea View, Los Angeles; and Jan Kaps Gallery, Cologne.



Deep Cuts: Nik Gelormino by Starlight
by Glenn Adamson:

So, what sign are you? It's one of the few questions you can ask anyone, and it's almost guaranteed to lead to an interesting conversation. No system of symbols is more prevalent, relatable, or elastic. And it's this combination of traits that attracted wood sculptor Nik Gelormino.

His treatment of the familiar 12-part cycle is idiosyncratic. Some emblems are immediately recognizable – a crab for Cancer, a pair of fish for Pisces, arrows in flight for Sagittarius – while others might take a minute. Capricorn, for example, is represented by ringed Saturn, the planet that rules that sign, while Leo gets a blazing sun instead of a lion. Wheat stands for Virgo, which arrives with the harvest, while Libra's principle of eternal balance is represented by a twisted ouroboros, the snake that eats its own tail.

These moments of encoding are significant, for they show us that Gelormino's approach is based on individual response, rather than established iconography. This is a zodiac for the imaginative among us; but then, why else would we be here? Not, presumably, because we need somewhere to put stuff, but rather because we're looking for a deeper connection.

Gelormino's carvings provide just that, partly by reaching backward in time. Processes don't come much more primary than a chisel cutting into wood. Nor is the joinery he's used anything unusual. Frame-and-panel coffers from the middle ages were similarly constructed. So was carved furniture made by Gustav Stickley, Charles Rohlf's, and other exponents of the Arts and Crafts Movement, which were themselves based on medieval precedents. More importantly than these points of construction, Gelormino's work shares the vivid symbolism that was prevalent among Arts and Crafts makers, as well as in contemporaneous Art Nouveau, which had a serious love affair with astrology and other symbolic systems. By infusing the wood with a sense of implicit motion – another aesthetic trope of Art Nouveau – he infuses the well-traveled emblems of the zodiac with a striking, glyph-like quality, as if they were so many runes for spellcasting.

His impetus for undertaking the project, however, was not necessarily to look back to historical precedents, or for that matter, to channel magical guidance from the heavens. On the contrary, his motivation had more to do with being firmly grounded in time and space. That is best done not by pretending to stillness, but by embracing the marvelous celestial rotation in which we all perpetually glide. It's worth noticing that, in addition to way that the zodiacal images imply this annual cycle, the woods from which they are made have their own multiple temporalities. They are made largely of studio offcuts: Douglas fir, mahogany, basswood, redwood, poplar, all culled together from boards on hand. Each has its own color and texture, its own way of receiving a cut. Each has its own age, as well, and though this accumulation of time may be rather indeterminate, one still feels it powerfully in the objects.

The future, too, is present in the gallery. It's not for nothing that astrology is so often associated with fortune-telling; like tarot cards or the I Ching, the zodiac strikes a perfect balance between specific lore and open association, opening up a space for prediction. This future orientation is deepened by the simple functionality of Gelormino's boxes – they stand ready to receive whatever comes – and the fact that the lids look somewhat like printing blocks, capable of generating any number of images of themselves.

A further calendrical layer is that of Gelormino's own biography, which has been imparted to the objects by the countless meditative hours he's spent on them. He began the project way back in 2017, and has been executing a new box periodically since, whenever he came across the right piece of wood for a top. All along, he was creating custom furniture, doors, hardware and other items in wood and metal, refining his yesterday-meets-tomorrow aesthetic.

Earlier, he'd studied in New York City, at Cooper Union, graduating in 2008. In those days, drawing was his primary medium, and it remains an animating paradigm for everything he makes. Carving, he says, uses the "same muscles" as drawing, and even when he's making something volumetric, he is delineating form in space. Here, he has made the connection explicit by creating a series of drawings, also based on the zodiac. They are not designs for the boxes, but were made subsequently as independent artworks; a fundamental kinship is immediately apparent, with dense stippling approximating the subtle facets left by the chisel's passage on the wood.

Given all this commitment, it's possible to see Gelormino's exploration of the zodiac as a form of self-portraiture, albeit one so allegorical that anyone can readily identify with it. For, as different as humans may be, all are equally held within the same mysterious balance of fate and free will. This, surely, is why astrology exerts such a compelling pull. It symbolizes many things – the ancient conception of the four elements, the ever-present desire for celestial harmony – but most fundamentally, it represents the idea that we are subject to forces beyond our control, even beyond our ken, yet must find our own way. "You're thrust into the world," as Gelormino puts it. "You don't get to pick the day you're born." Yet nothing is so intimately tied to identity (otherwise, you wouldn't have your date of birth on your passport). It's the paradox of predetermination, one worth pondering even though it can't ever be solved. For, when you're on the open sea – and aren't we all, all the time? – it's the very act of navigating that gives a sense of direction. What Nik Gelormino has done is to materialize that instinct, that basic necessity. In this show, he's given us an anchorage, where we can simply be, for a while, under the sun and stars.

Checklist



Nik Gelormino

Coil (box no. 01), 2024

linden, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

A Lover, A Fighter (box no. 02), 2024

mahogany, eucalyptus

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

Motion Pictures (box no. 03), 2024

douglas fir, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

To Feel (box no. 04), 2024

linden, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

Heir (box no. 05), 2024

douglas fir, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

The Collector (box no. 06), 2024

douglas fir, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

Weight (box no. 07), 2024

douglas fir, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

Fait Accompli (box no.08), 2024

linden, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

The Breeze (box no. 09), 2024

mahogany, eucalyptus

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

This Time (box no. 10), 2024

poplar, redwood, oak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

The Benefactor (box no. II), 2024

linden, redwood, teak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

Old Soul, The Dreamer (box no. 12), 2024

linden, redwood, teak

16 1/2" (W) x 20 1/2" (L) x 5" (H)







Nik Gelormino

Coil (drawing no. 01), 2024

ink on paper

11 1/4" x 12 5/8" inches (framed)



Nik Gelormino

A Lover, A Fighter (drawing no. 02), 2024

ink on paper

10 3/8 x 11 7/8 inches (framed)



Nik Gelormino

Motion Pictures (drawing no. 03), 2024

ink on paper

10 3/8 x 11 7/8 inches (framed)



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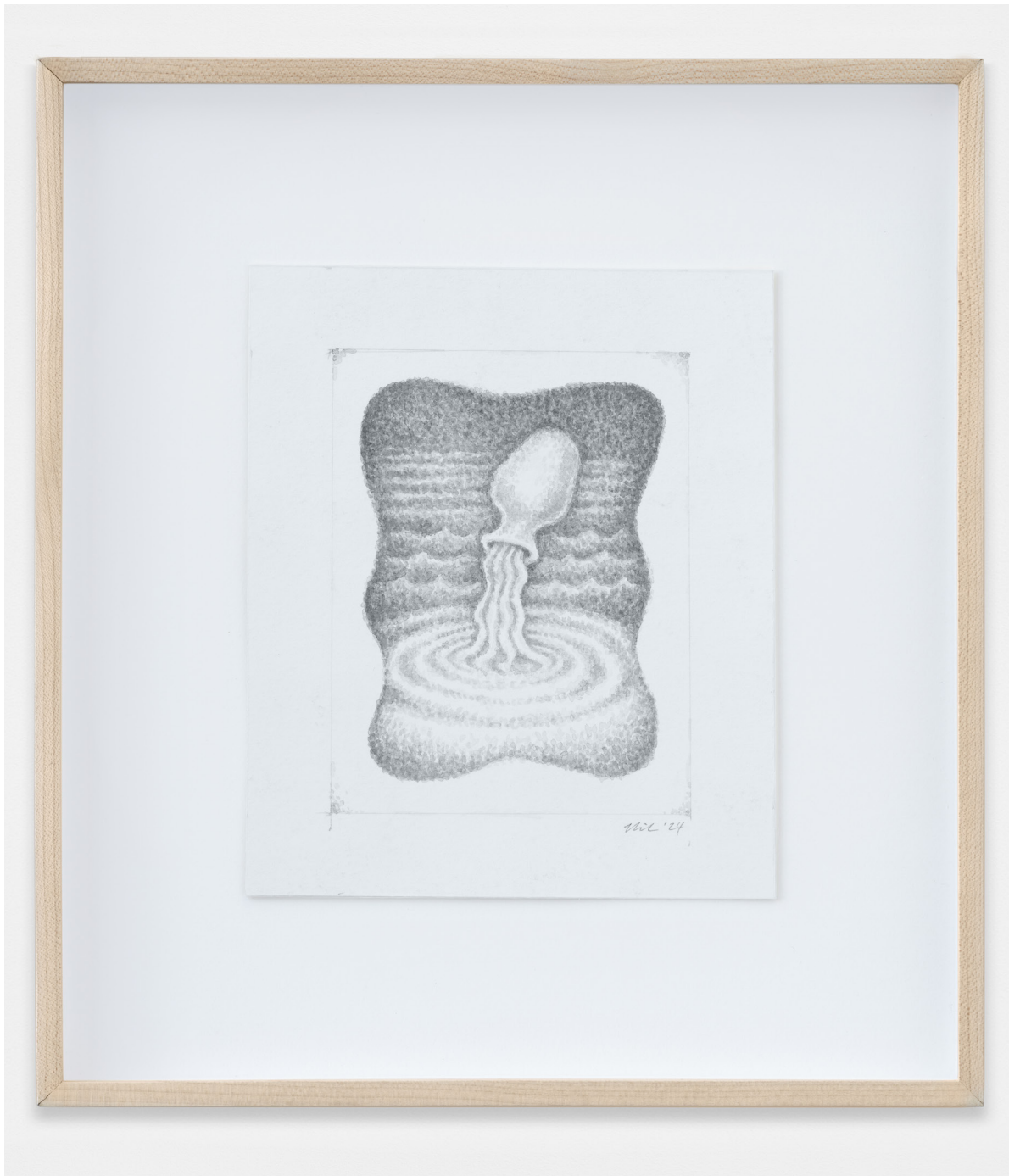


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This Time (drawing no. 10), 2024

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Nik Gelormino

The Benefactor (drawing no. II), 2024

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10 3/8 x 11 7/8 inches (framed)



Nik Gelormino

Old Soul (drawing no. 12), 2024

ink on paper

10 3/8 x 11 7/8 inches (framed)

Additional Available Work



Nik Gelormino

Flat Car (no. 01), 2022

hand-carved cedar

17¼ (H) x 15 (W) x 36 (D) inches





Nik Gelormino

Flat Dove (no. 01), 2022

hand-carved cedar

15¼ (H) x 12½ (W) x 35½ (D) inches



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