

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to announce a group exhibition featuring works in ceramic by nine contemporary artists including Jessica Jackson Hutchins, Cameron Jamie, Liz Larner, Andrew Lord, William O'Brien, Sterling Ruby, Rosemarie Trockel, Paloma Varga Weisz, and Andro Wekua. While these artists' practices encompass a diverse range of media from drawing and installation to film and video, each incorporates clay in distinct ways that reveal not only the multitude of formal and conceptual possibilities of the medium, but also the broader, constructive processes through which forms emerge.

The exhibition borrows its title from Aristotle's theory of the alchemical transmutation of basic matter into form. The concept alludes to the elemental primacy of clay and the ways in which the production of ceramic is immanently bound to the technical processes that transform its material properties. Marked by its inherent malleability and morphological nature, clay's essential "informe" invites artists to draw upon the historical context of its varying forms and functions to create visceral experiences that challenge our notions of art and objecthood.

Exploring the relationship between materiality and function, Hutchins combines found objects including furniture, fabric, and newspaper to create works that simultaneously explore the mundane and mythological aspects of everyday life. Glazed in shades of green, Jamie's ceramic sculptures embody the emotional gestures of physical energies, using both the controllable and uncontrollable dimensions of ceramic to allow each form to find its own identity. While Larner's wall mounted work focuses on the perceptual experience in the act of looking, Lord draws upon the variegated vocabulary of Pre-Colombian art, creating an assembly of vessels that feature motifs such as the double-headed snake and skull. O'Brien's uncanny ceramic objects are distinctly anti-minimalist and represent his intuitive approach to materiality, much like Ruby's basin-like dish filled with crudely modeled clay fragments, reminiscent of prehistoric artifacts and archeological sites. Displaced from their original contexts, Trockel's ceramic sculptures deconstruct the human impulse to neatly connect meaning and function, instead creating works that often mysteriously play upon a network of social and cultural associations. Weisz's work looks to the human figure, modeling tender portraits glazed in muted tones that imbue the act of looking with a sense of poignant remembrance. Uniformly glazed in a porcelain white, Wekua's sculpture reflects his interest in re-contextualizing architectural elements and the human figure, generating uniquely dream-like works that meditate upon the conditions of memory, fantasy, and identity.

Immediately reflecting each artist's intimate relationship to style, scale, texture, shape, and color, together these works illuminate not only the wide range of formal and technical concerns at play, but also the ever growing artistic imperative to subvert, resist, and reinvent historical precedents.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*