

Timothy Hawkinson Gallery

... and a heart pumping blood.



**Rick Bartow
jinseok choi
Liz Glynn
Peter Shelton
Cole Speck**

**Opening Wednesday, December 10th, 6-8pm
On view to Saturday, January 24th, 2026
(*Closed December 24th to January 3rd)**

Quick lines or rough holes to indicate eyes or a mouth aren't even necessary. An oval shape feels like all that is really needed for us to identify a face, to project a presence. So strong is our impulse to see ourselves, to connect with the outside world, that we routinely anthropomorphize rocks, knots in trees, clouds, bits of lint, burnt pieces of toast, into the visages of each other. The history of masks likely stretches back into Paleolithic times, predating written languages. Their ability to immediately conjure an identity or concept multiplying their uses over the millennia. The five artists in this exhibition are making masks now.

Cole Speck's first love is the satisfaction of bringing forth a new being into the world in the form of a mask. While the living culture most informs his choices, his artistic practice encompasses a tremendous love and respect for history. Speck (b.1991 Kwakwaka'wakw) aspires to keep old traditions alive while allowing his contemporary perspective to emerge. He was an apprentice to Beau Dick for a decade, and to Wayne Alfred as well. The masks are thus not static objects, the concerns of the present are continuous with the past; there is no binary. Like Dick, Speck shows that his culture's stories and practices contain profound teachings about balance, community responsibility, and personal transformation fundamentally relevant to daily life now. They are part of the physical and ceremonial culture of their creation, through which the deep connection to the forest is continually reinforced and echoed. Their disruption of modern spaces generating an opportunity to reset perspective, to reject the present's hold on truth, providing a chance for shaping the future. He is represented by Fazakas Gallery, Vancouver.

In a working career spanning 50 years, **Peter Shelton** rigorously explored a range of forms. While his early works were nominally geometric, references to the body, without depicting the body directly, were already present. Over time his increasingly sophisticated exploration of mass and space in a material effort to engage both body and mind led to more overt manifestations of organic shapes. His relatively recent series of head sculptures firmly occupy this liminal space of perpetual suggestion. These sculptures, like the other masks here, immediately invoke presences and personalities. The series mostly does not have discernible features, yet this absence makes certain emotions indicated in the works to be read more clearly, and they remain distinctly human (or at least humanoid). His work has been featured in solo exhibitions at the Whitney Museum of American Art, LACMA, MCASD San Diego, The Walker Art Center, Allen Memorial Art Museum, UCLA, UC Berkeley, the Arts Club of Chicago, the San Jose Museum of Art, Des Moines Art Center and many others. His works are held in a laundry list of over four dozen major institution's permanent collections, including MoMA, the Hammer, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, and MOCA (LA). He worked with L.A. Louver and Sperone Westwater for decades.

Liz Glynn's masks are handcrafted in clay to portray a breadth of dramatic expressions. Exaggerated features quickly indicating emotional states and internal psychology; engendering distinct characters. Glynn's masks parallel objects from classical antiquity to analyze the present. Changing masks in ancient theater could transform a single thespian into different identities. The Aristotelian concept of 'pathos' lent a title to these works, which manifested theatrically in a goal of provoking an emotional connection from the audience. Glynn applies the line of thinking to examine contemporary social dynamics: the performances and persuasions inherent in all interactions, the politics of human relationships, and the shifting balance between authenticity and artifice. Liz Glynn (b. 1981, Boston) lives in Los Angeles and is represented by VIELMETTER LOS ANGELES and Paula Cooper Gallery in New York. Her work has been included in solo exhibitions at MASS MoCA, LACMA, SculptureCenter, Doris C. Freedman Plaza (The Public Art Fund) in NY, and in group shows at the Hammer Museum in 2023 and the *Made in LA* biennial (2012), the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh, the Getty Museum's *Pacific Standard Time*, and the New Museum's *The Generational: Younger than Jesus*, among many more.

jinseok choi's recent oeuvre has examined the politics of invisible labor. Most often made from reclaimed items drawn from industries that have a long history with immigrant labor. Salvaged matter such as antique 19th century railroad spikes and fabric offcuts from garment sweatshops. They are imbued with residue of labor, time, memory and history that is both personal and public. His series of mask sculptures are made from wood scraps and sawdust left over from products he has produced for others as a professional woodworker, expanding the discussion of labor to include art fabricators. Inspired by the collective nature of traditional Korean masks in folk plays, masks that invoke characters who reveal the hypocrisy of the aristocratic class by mocking them. These trickster masks hide and protect the identities of the people behind them while offering space for social criticism. Like Glynn, choi looks to a model from the past to argue that such critical analysis is urgently needed. He hopes to shed light on the beauty, power, and potential of everyday labor, often neglected in a highly capitalized and individualized society. The sculptures include incense elements that are made of hardwood sawdust, a health hazard to woodworkers. These are burned with the intent of inviting visitors to engage their senses and contemplate the existence—and meaning—of labor in our collective past and in current life. He earned an MFA from CalArts in 2018, and prior to this studied in Korea at the Korea National University of Arts, Seoul (MFA 2016) and Hongik University, Seoul (BFA 2012). He had a large solo exhibition in 2024-25, *Before the Last Spike*, in the Peter and Merle Mullin Gallery at ArtCenter College of Design, Los Angeles. Other solo and group exhibitions including his work have been staged at Human Resources, FOCA, The Box, MAK Center, Office Hours, a poco art archive, and many more.

Rick Bartow (1946-2016) drew from personal experiences, cultural engagement, and global myths, especially Indigenous transformation stories. Animals, masked humans, hybrid-figures, and self-portraits populate his images. Bartow experienced extremes in his lifetime, living through tragic losses of loved ones, witnessing graphic violence, surviving addictions and other health crises. He also knew immense joys; loving and being loved, having deep and substantive friendships, being in a position to make and exhibit his art, performing and recording music. This breadth of highs and lows shaped his steadfast worldview that life requires sustained efforts of making continuous adjustments to find and maintain some kind of elusive balance. Entropy feels inevitable; it is so easy for forces that seem beyond our control to throw off our tentative equilibrium, but cycles of renewal and regrowth in nature offer a model for the possibility to correct course. Bartow was a member of the Wiyot Tribe and a professionally trained artist, he lived and worked on the Oregon coast. A current solo exhibition of Bartow's work, *Storyteller*, is on view at the Portland Art Museum, curated by Kathleen Ash-Milby. *Things You Know But Cannot Explain*, a major retrospective had an eleven city tour over five years (2015-2020); it originated at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, in Eugene, curated by Jill Hartz and Danielle Knapp. His work can be found in the permanent collections of over one hundred museums and institutions. One of four pieces owned by The Whitney was on view recently in *What It Becomes. We Were Always Here*, a monumental pair of commissioned sculptures by Bartow were installed in 2012 on the National Mall outside The Smithsonian's NMAI. Other institutions holding his work include the Brooklyn Museum, the Yale University Art Gallery, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Denver Art Museum and scores of others. Recently his work was included in the landmark exhibition *Indian Theater: Native Performance, Art, and Self-Determination since 1969*, curated by Candice Hopkins at the Hessel Museum/ CCS Bard and then the Mackenzie Art Gallery in Saskatchewan, Canada.