

VIGOROUS FORM

Contemporary Ceramics show featuring Andrew Casto, Tessa Eastman, Shannon Goff, David Hicks, Linda Lopez and Alex Simpson.

Curated by Courtenay Moon

Private View: Thursday, November 16th | 6 – 9pm

Exhibition: Friday, November 17th – Friday, November 24th | 11 – 7pm

The Gallery, Unit 9, The Huntingdon Estate, Ebor St, London E1 6JU

New Group Exhibition Re-examines 'The New Ceramic Presence' in Contemporary Art

A new contemporary ceramics show, *Vigorous Form*, opens in London next month, showcasing works by European and American artists Andrew Casto, Tessa Eastman, Shannon Goff, David Hicks, Linda Lopez and Alex Simpson. Taking place at The Gallery, Unit 9, Huntingdon Estate from 16-24 November, the exhibition is inspired by Rose Slivka's 1961 poignant essay, 'The New Ceramic Presence'.

Writing about the ceramic boom in the US in the late 1950s, in her essay Slivka highlights the emerging dominance of the machine and consumers' new found desire for the real and the handmade. As Slivka stated at the time, "We are accustomed to our functional problems being solved efficiently and economically by mechanical means, yet we are acutely aware of our particular need for the handcrafts today to satisfy aesthetic and psychological urgencies".

In today's technological obsessed society, this is more prevalent now than ever, and the show explores the complex sources of modern ceramics, its widespread reintegration into the wider context of contemporary art and the genesis of vigorous new forms. Taking these ideals into consideration, the new exhibition represents not only the relationship between conceptual boldness and ambitious experimentation but also the growing relationship between contemporary art and ceramics.

"The show assembles a series of playful, challenging and intriguing forms that emphasise how the value of use has become a secondary or even arbitrary attribute in contemporary ceramics," says Courtenay Moon, the exhibitions curator, "As Slivka so aptly pointed out ahead of her time, all over the modern world, the creative potter has been re-evaluating their relation to function - and the featured works catch a static glimpse of the different artists' varying approaches to the role of clay as a creative vehicle".

Each of *Vigorous Form*'s artists has an explicitly individual, yet complementary, mood of expression. Andrew Casto creates gilded expressionist assemblages that are collaborative with nature. David Hicks' suspended compositions reflect his growing response to personal detachment from the natural world due to the artificial landscape of steel and technology that surrounds us. Tessa Eastman reaches away from the conventional bounds of sculptural form toward an energy of space and the formal possibilities of activated surface, while Lopez finds spark in ordinary objects; her clay works – biomorphic, majestic and psychotropic – gesture viscerally towards experience. Recent RCA graduate Alex Simpson's unique exploration of the medium encompasses the new emphasis on the excitement of surface qualities and possibilities – texture, colour, form – and to the artistic validity of spontaneous creative events during the working process.

The week-long exhibition follow on the heels of *Cracked*, an all-female contemporary ceramics show curated by Moon that took place in July 2017. As featured on VICE's arts and culture platform, Creators, the summertime show first highlighted the important role of clay as an invaluable medium in contemporary art.

Vigorous Form takes place from Friday, 17 November to Friday, 24 November at The Gallery, Unit 9 Huntingdon Estate, London. The gallery is open from 11am-7pm daily. For more information on the exhibition, visit www.courtenaymoon.com/vigorous-form/. For media enquiries or to RSVP for the Private View on Thursday, 16 November, please contact Courtenay Moon at cm@courtenaymoon.com or +44 7793 211728.