

Flaunting ideas of lavishness, excess and desire, the gathering of contemporary ceramic sculptures and installations stretches the limits of the clay medium by engaging in concept, process and participation. *Übertyummy: Contemporary Confections of Desire* brings exuberant artists with works that visually stimulate, tactually tease and challenge the notions of gender, greed, gluttony, and glamour. With an instant pop appeal, alluring atmospheres spill out artificial schemes that entrance us into consumerism, mass production, and feelings of extreme behavior. Visually embellished with sublime colors and the hyper tactility of surface, these objects bring over-the-top scenes of leisure and create a synesthetic experience. From kitschy objects and fantasy figurines, to tantalizingly mysterious anamorphic forms, the viewer is invited to encounter a range of perspectives and consequences that alternate between the surly and the savory.

What unites these artists is the integral yet disparate approach towards concept and materiality. While some are rooted in the contemporary ceramic art movement, others combine innovative materials which intentionally juxtapose with clay or mimic its elasticity by making new amalgamate mediums, shapes, and surfaces that can be manipulated, molded, and fired. These “crossbred” mediums, considered gourmet by some, create combinations that not only challenge traditional ceramic methodologies, but also herald the perceptions of ceramics and its skill-based value within the contemporary art world. These artists have abounded full force declaring a new frontier for contemporary sculpture and have bridged multiple media using their cleverness, dexterity, and intention. Shed is the stigma of “pure clay” for a resourceful and creative approach to materials that are employed because they simply work, while still maintaining the integrity of clay and the goal to reach their concept.

*Übertyummy* reminds us of the importance of play, curiosity, and humor, keeping us feeling like happily engaged humans. With themes incorporating artificial excess and seduction, these artworks allure the viewer into a euphoric state of satisfaction, delight, and guilty pleasure. The extravagance and unhindered creativity (über), which yield seemingly lickable objects (yummy), are lustfully decadent, playfully seductive, and

bubble with ambrosial delight. In consequence, we experience a multi-sensorial explosion of fantasy, fun, and exploration that calls to the child in all of us.

Karen Crews Hendon and Alison Petty Ragguette

Guest Curators, *Überyummy: Contemporary Confections of Desire*

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