

# OUT OF SITE / BODY / MIND

Fifteen ceramicists create dialogues between two languages of hardened earth—one comprising walls, floors and ceilings that define and restrict our identities and perception, and the other reflecting prolonged and intimate encounters of human bodies with bodies of clay. For one artist, the wall may mean “stop” or “start” and the clay body “go” or the culmination of personal expression; for another the wall may mean “portal” and the clay body something writhing out of it that threatens to throttle the self. For others, the ability to create a closed universe or hypothetical home opens up possibilities for clay, through unexpected uses in those contexts, to enunciate what we miss in our everyday environments. For all, things taken for granted—dirt/clay, under-the-radar care, manners, knowledge, birds, cats, fish, lines, form and texture—are encountered anew and appreciated through a willingness to meet, again and again, their respective challenges.

Minga Opazo, Raven Russell and Won Chang answer the material and formal challenges of working with clay through, respectively, weaving with it, wiring ribbons and creating geometries. Weaving slip-covered wool into a moss-like mat and extruded red clay with thread in a loom, Opazo places her mat’s apparent softness and fired firmness in conversation by leaning it against a wall, and hangs her tapestry to evoke an airy lightness where the piece’s actual weight demands a metal support rod. Russell effects conversation through direct wired connections rather than juxtapositions, sparking an ebullient exchange between two hollow form rings, and Chang, inspired by Ron Nagle, intimately rediscovers combinations and shadows afforded by palm-sized and understated geometric forms.

Christine Liu, Casey Baden, Bailey Small, Mona Liu and Tony Wu explore the fictions, facts, horrors and pleasures of containments or bindings of the human body. Christine’s ghost-white body, having lost its head/mind, crawls toward resuscitation, opposed not only by gravity but an unhuman number of hands and heads representing mounting fears and responsibilities. Baden’s coil-built vessels allude to interlocking bodies, and together with braided textiles and cascading text reference helical entwinement and electrical flow between energies intimately bound. Small’s astonishingly lifelike dinner spread reflects the veneer of reality cast by social rules to which we all, sometimes pathologically, agree to be bound, and Mona’s and Wu’s pieces respectively illustrate and question ideas of being caged by ignorance, doctrine or conditioned perception.

Jenny Eom, Amy Dolan, Helen (Yunmeng) Jiang and Helene Phillips, in wide-ranging turns, spotlight human care. Where Eom commemorates the typically unacknowledged labor of cleaning and maintaining interiors with a tenderhearted plaque and slip swept onto the floor, Dolan situates “cleaning others’ messes” in the realm of horror where becoming too enmeshed in rescuing another yields a shattering loss of self. Jiang’s cheerful desert scape is an idyllic antidote, a nostalgic nod to childhood moments spent happily with her caring grandparents, as is Phillips’ underwater tea party, a toast to healthy support systems inspired by The Beatles’ “Octopus’s Garden.”

Joining Phillips’ purple octopus in the gallery is Camellia Saleh’s gleaming white cat on a pillow, Siyan Ji’s variegated turtles and fish and Audrey Jackson’s communion font and bath for birds. For Ji, aquatic life point to the exotic and unknowable ocean, harboring mysteries promising both freedom and death, and Jackson playfully gives religion to the birds, granting them through baptism a second life and liberation beyond that afforded by their wings.

California Institute of the Arts, D301  
November 4-9, 2019 | Opening November 7, 8pm  
Curated by Jennie Park (MFA-1, Art)

Clockwise from left of gallery entrance:

1. *a study for the plaque project*, **Jenny Eom** (MFA-2, Art)
2. *Rubberneck*, **Amy Dolan** (BFA-1, Art)
3. *Process based making I, Process based making II*, **Minga Opazo** (MFA-2, Art)
4. *Childhood Desert*, **Helen (Yunmeng) Jiang** (BFA-2, Art)
5. *Life*, **Christine Liu** (BFA-1, Art)
6. *Octa's garden*, **Helene Phillips** (BFA-2, Art)
7. *study of interconnectivity, humanity and aesthetics*, **Raven Russell** (BFA-2, Art)
8. *braided entanglement / bound consciousness*, **Casey Baden** (MFA-2, Art)
9. *Untitled*, **Won Chang** (MFA-1, Art)
10. *Aquarium*, **Siyan Ji** (BFA-2, Photography and Media)
11. *Bird Bath Baptismal, Bird Communion*, **Audrey Jackson** (BFA-4, Art)
12. *Guided Dinner Service Research Project*, **Bailey Small** (BFA-2, Art)
13. *Behind the bars*, **Mona Liu** (BFA-2, Photography and Media)
14. *Untitled*, **Tony Wu** (MFA-1, Photography and Media)
15. *Enchanted Delight*, **Camellia Saleh** (center of gallery) (BFA-3, Art)