

Kissick, Dean, i-D, November 2012.

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Just off, and under, the Kingsland Road, South London potter (and football superstar) Jesse Wine has constructed and raked his own take on a traditional Japanese rock garden across Limoncello Gallery’s airy basement space. “I was watching documentaries and reading up on raking, which is actually ridiculously difficult and regarded as an important job,” explains the artist of his preparations for the show, *The Practice of the Wild*. “Then the pots sit like sacred stones in a Japanese Zen garden, and you’re not allowed to walk on the gravel, you’re only allowed to walk on the boardwalk.” Rather than preserving the minimalist white voids we often associate with contemporary exhibitions, Jesse has transformed the gallery into a world-within-a-world which smells of nature and looks like a fantasy map... of the seven kingdoms of Westeros in the opening credits of *Game of Thrones*, or a bird’s-eye view of Japanese video game lands like Hyrule. Every subtly glazed ceramic, with their holes and protrusions and occasionally buttocks (as he explains, “every pot has a little bum, I think it’s quite an important part of what I do so I like to keep it in sight) resembles a castle rising out of the rippling, rocky landscape of almost six tonnes of gravel. At the opening the audience was crowded onto the raised, narrow dark-wood walkways circumnavigating

the room, squeezing everyone up against each other, and putting them on display just as much as the artworks below. It was, unsurprisingly, a lot more fun than an ordinary private view! “I chose a Zen garden because it’s a test of how much you can control the environment you’re going to have your show in,” says Jesse. “I’ve only been to Zen gardens in people’s houses in London, actually in two collectors’ houses where I’ve been hanging pictures. One was in Notting Hill and one in Holland Park.” Now he’s opened his own pleasure garden, in which one can search for inner peace, or relax, or dream of jumping in and touching the baked clay burns. **DK**  
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