

Simone Subal Gallery

“Jesse Wine,” *Vitamin C Clay + Ceramics*, Phaidon, October 2017.

Jesse Wine's reliefs, vessels and tableau-like scenes explore process, colour and form, testing the potential of clay as a responsive, sculptural material. His approach to making leaves much to chance: he experiments with traditional glazing and firing techniques and embraces the possibility of error and uncertainty. The results are often unstable; colours melt and blend and structures collapse, the surfaces of the sculptures are brittle and uneven with glazes that flake and crack.

Wine's playful ceramic objects and still lifes give form to the peculiarities and rituals of the everyday, drawing on our shared experiences. His lopsided and crumpled empty vessels are often finished with oxidized rust or shiny metallic glazes; misshapen heads wear mischievous expressions, with contorted faces and tongues poking out. Works such as the *travelling white man* (2013–14) and *Jesse show passion* (2014) series sport modern accessories, belts, beanies and bobble hats. Others are less figurative, with textured and gnarly surfaces and densely layered colours that dribble and pool. His objects have a cartoon-like quality – platters of food, giant drinking vessels, a teetering pile of books – and combine to form larger installations.

Wine's trilogy of works *Young man red I–III* (2014) recreates episodes from the artist's daily life with oversized ceramic puppets and props and in so doing poses questions around identity and self-image. Suspended from the ceiling, the puppets act out everyday activities: making work in the studio, eating lunch, choosing the right sports shoes to wear. Comprising a hat, gilet, shorts, hands, legs and feet, these partial, disembodied self-portraits hover over low platforms. The props complete the narrative and animate each scene: scaled-up bags of clay, scalpels, a rolling pin, a half-finished sculpture; a bottle of wine and a discarded lunch; a selection of the artist's favourite slides and Reebok Classics. Dramatically lit, like a theatrical set, the works recall Alexander Calder's mobiles or museum dioramas.

A more recent ensemble, *After awhile you could get used to anything* (2016) presents strange Surrealist re-imaginings of a classical scene, with carefully arranged objects alluding to museological displays of artefacts or relics. Wine's installation *Working title, not sure yet* (2016), deconstructs bodily form and investigates the degradation of materials using fired and unfired clay. Rusty body parts – a dismembered foot, half a leg, a saggy glove – are floating in space or pinned to the wall.

Wine also pays homage to other artists by creating replicas of their works – among them Peter Voulkos, Ken Price and John Mason, who shifted the conception of ceramics as purely functional to an experimental medium and were at the centre of California's flourishing art scene in the 1950s and 1960s. Encouraging a dialogue between past and present, Wine adopts their approaches and methods and remakes their sculptures as an ongoing part of his practice. The work of these artists remains a frame of reference to which he continually returns.

• Emma Dean

Jesse Wine Born 1983, Chester, UK. Lives and works in New York. **Selected Solo Exhibitions:** 2016 – 'Working title, not sure yet', Mary Mary, Glasgow; 'Sludgy Portrait of Himself', Museum of Cambridge, UK; 2014 – 'Young man red', BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, UK, and touring to Gemeentemuseum, Den Haag, Netherlands. **Selected Group Exhibitions:** 2017 – 'That Continuous Thing: Artists and the Ceramic Studio, 1920 – Today', Tate St Ives, Cornwall, UK; 2016 – 'Looking North', Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, UK; 'Luster – Clay in Sculpture Today', Fundament Foundation, Tilburg, Netherlands; 'Material Language', New Art Centre, Roche Court, UK; 'Sorcières et Escargots', Neuchâtel International Fantastic Film Festival, Switzerland; 'British Art Show 8', Leeds City Art Gallery, UK, and touring to Inverleith House, Edinburgh; 'Paul Heyer, Jeanette Mundt, Jesse Wine', Andrea Rosen Gallery, New York; 'Gesture Play', Simone Subal Gallery, New York.

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