

Material Success, an exhibition September 12 to October 8, 2016
Monday through Thursday and Saturdays 12:00 to 5:00 pm
Opening Reception Sunday, September 11 from 3:00 to 5:00 PM
José Drudis-Biada Gallery, Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles
12001 Chalon Rd, Los Angeles, CA 90049-1599. Phone 310.954.4360

FOUR SCULPTORS

Four artists working in Southern California are all fiercely engaged with the material world to create something out of what has already been something else. They are united in reviling the pervasiveness of waste. They share an obvious love of craft, of the well-made thing. In other respects, they work from distinct points of view.

Connie D.K. Lane confronts us with big, heavy, lumpy, perhaps biomorphic things hanging from the ceiling and lean on walls. The viewer is enveloped in the sculptural environment. Lane has alluded to memories of skinned carcasses hanging from hooks in the markets in the Hong Kong of her childhood. Transformations, continuities and inclusions are on her mind: from living thing to dead meat to a meal that are all part of the cycle of being, of past present and future. Her analysis and her production are deeply provocative.

Valerie Wilcox In Valerie Wilcox's "Constructs", her works present a re-imagined understanding of our constructed environment, perceptions of our own identity and how our brain works to piece together diverse constituents. She works in the realm between painterly sculptures and sculptural paintings. Ambiguous shapes hover between a two dimensional plane and a three dimensional structure, often nuanced by the effects of light and shadow, thus playing with the idea of space and perception, but not necessarily the reality of it. Appearing as both sculpture and paintings, these "objects in space" emphasize the materials with which they were made as much ————— as the painted surfaces. Wilcox's "Constructs" at once become referential, self-reflexive and whimsical, managing to transcend their base materiality, as her source materials are elevated and imbued with newness of form and function. Prejudice and perception, judgments and acceptance all play a part in her conversation with the viewer.

Linda Smith reveals a sense of play in seemingly childlike constructions in glazed ceramics. Firmly aligned with figurative expression, Smith creates cats, dogs, individual people and couples to express her delight in the detail of the gestures of living things. She alludes to Greek myth and pays homage to other contemporary artists. She deploys brilliant color to contribute to the humor and goodwill of her pieces and paints sensitive faces on ceramic that express poignant emotions without sentimentality. Her sensitivity to expression and gesture may derive from an early engagement with film and her work is masterfully realized in clay, that most plastic of materials. She acknowledges the influence of Picasso, Leger and Matisse, and American ceramic artists Viola Frey, Robert Arneson and the Funk movement in Northern California.

Gina Herrera engages with her mixed American Tesuque Pueblo and Costa Rican heritage, her experience as a soldier in the war in Iraq and her reverence for the earth by using repurposed materials collected everywhere. -She states that her "greatest objective is to awaken individual and societal consciousness; to examine and heal our relationship with Mother Earth." Her figures of found thread and clumps of clay suggest clever spirits that occupy our world at her behest. Herrera's work is meant to heal both her and her viewers.

These four artists are also unified by their acute concern with the impact of their work on

viewers. None of them works in a ivory tower. They are committed to broadening our perceptions.