



INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART
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NEWS RELEASE



DIRT ON DELIGHT: IMPULSES THAT FORM CLAY

JANUARY 16–JUNE 21, 2009

OPENING RECEPTION: THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 6-8PM

EXHIBITION WALKTHROUGH WITH SENIOR CURATOR INGRID SCHAFFNER AND
ASSOCIATE CURATOR JENELLE PORTER: THURSDAY, JANUARY 15, 5PM, *ICA*
MEMBERS ONLY



PHILADELPHIA, PA

To start the new year in the first floor gallery, ICA is pleased to present “Dirt On Delight: Impulses That Form Clay,” significant work in clay by 22 artists spanning four generations on view January 16-June 21, 2009.

Ranging from modestly scaled pots to figurines to large sculptures, these objects cross a spectrum of conventional delineations among fine art, craft, and outsider practices. Collectively they suggest that clay appeals to basic impulses, starting with the delight of building form, coupled with the anxiety of completion. All of the works in the exhibition appear to be in some state of flux or growth.

Clay is a base material. From potsherds to porcelain fixtures, clay is synonymous with the building of industries and cultures. At the same time, its very materiality—its tactile malleability, earthen sensuousness, and humidity—make it the medium of more elemental associations and expressions. The immediacy with which clay allows one to build form and create ornament underlies its appeal—especially in relation to current modes that seem to take fabrication increasingly out of artists’ hands. More specifically, this exhibition is an opportunity to examine not only clay’s appeal but craft in general.

The artists in “Dirt on Delight” include the current generation (Nicole Cherubini, Jessica Jackson Hutchins, Jeffrey Mitchell, Sterling Ruby, and Paul Swenbeck), artists who emerged during the 1990s (Ann Agee, Kathy Butterly, Jane Irish, Arlene Shechet, and Beverly Semmes), those who established clay as a critical material during the 1960s and 1970s (Robert Arneson, Viola Frey, Ron Nagle, Ken Price, Adrian Saxe, Beatrice Wood and Betty Woodman), and historic and outsider figures (Lucio Fontana, Peter Voulkos, and Rudolf Staffel, as well as George Ohr and Eugene Von Bruenchenhein).

This exhibition is organized by Senior Curator Ingrid Schaffner and Associate Curator Jenelle Porter, with art historian Glenn Adamson and is accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue. Following its presentation at ICA, the exhibition will be on view at the Walker Art Center from July 11 to November 29, 2009.

top: Kathy Butterly, *Cenote*, 2004
porcelain, earthenware and glaze
4 3/4 x 4 1/8 x 4 inches. Private
collection; courtesy of Tibor de Nagy
Gallery, New York. Photo: D. James Dee

bottom: Peter Voulkos, *Sculpture*, 1957,
glazed stoneware, 35 x 21 x 21 inches.
Scripps College, Claremont, California;
gift of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Marer

CONTACT

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*checklist and images available upon request.

GENERAL INFORMATION

ICA is located at:
118 South 36th Street at the
University of Pennsylvania

ICA is open to the public from 12pm to 8pm on Wednesday through Friday and from 11am to 5pm on Saturday and Sunday.

Admission is FREE everyday.

Free admission to the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania for the public is sponsored by Glenn R. Fuhrman (W87/WG88) Fund.

For more information,
call 215-898-7108/5911, or visit
www.icaphila.org.

INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART

Founded in 1963, the Institute of Contemporary Art at the University of Pennsylvania is a leader in the presentation and documentation of contemporary art. Through exhibitions, commissions, educational programs, and publications, ICA invites the public to share in the experience, interpretation and understanding of the work of established and emerging artists.

RELATED PUBLIC PROGRAMS:

Event: Little Notes Concerning the Forming of a Vase

Organized by artist Jane Irish

Whenever Wednesday, January 21, 6:30pm / FREE for members, \$5 General Admission

Conversation: Betty Woodman and Helen W. Drutt English

Whenever Wednesday, March 4, 6:30pm

A Spiegel Fund event

Conversation: Kathy Butterly and Garth Clark

Whenever Wednesday, March 25, 6:30pm

A Spiegel Fund event.

ICA is grateful for primary sponsorship from The Pew Center for Arts and Heritage through the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative. ICA acknowledges generous support from William L. True and funding from The Toby Fund, Locks Foundation, Janet S. Kardon, Mrs. Helen W. Drutt English & H. Peter Stern and Elaine Finkelstein. We are thankful for generous support of this show from ICA's Vision Fund donors: Dorothy A. Weber & Stephen R. Weber Endowment Fund; Nancy E. & Leonard M. Amoroso Exhibition Endowment Fund; Dorothy H. and Martin N. Bandier Endowment Fund; The Cheri S. & Steven M. Friedman Endowment Fund; The Pamela Spiegel Sanders C'78 Exhibition Endowment Fund established by The Jerry & Emily Spiegel Family Foundation, Inc.; Lurie Family Foundation; Lawrence S. Reichlin. Additional funding has been provided by The Horace W. Goldsmith Foundation, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, The Dietrich Foundation, Inc., the Overseers Board for the Institute of Contemporary Art, friends and members of ICA, and the University of Pennsylvania. ICA is also grateful to The Chodorow Exhibition Initiative Fund for support of the exhibition's tour.

ALL PROGRAMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE VISIT THE ICA WEBSITE, WWW.ICAPHILA.ORG, FOR MORE INFORMATION ON PROGRAMS IN CONJUNCTION WITH DIRT ON DELIGHT: IMPULSES THAT FORM CLAY.