

press release for immediate use

CLAY 3

3 - 27 February 2016

Featuring Glenn Barkley, Donna Green, Eloise Rankine, Brett Stone and Kati Watson

"Clay ain't anything new, but it is certainly something that is enduring", says Utopia Art Sydney director Christopher Hodges.

There has been something of a clay renaissance across the international contemporary art scene. Ceramics keep popping up at art fairs, commercial galleries and museums, whether by seasoned ceramicists or by multi-media artists who incorporate clay in their practice.

"Hand-made and crafty, the opposite of the internet, clay symbolises a return to the unique," Hodges commented. "It's also often priced so that a broader, younger market can afford it. But let's be frank, it has always been available to people... only suddenly the zeitgeist has recognised the remarkable quality of a medium that is one of the oldest and most enduring in the history of art."

'Clay' has become Utopia Art Sydney's annual showcase of the work of the ceramic artists the gallery represents. The exhibition was first staged as a tribute to Marea Gazzard, who championed clay as an art form equal to any.

Each of these artists uses clay in their own unique way, some pushing it to its limits as a sculptural medium, others perfecting essential functional forms.

Kati Watson's ceramics are elegant and understated; everything about her work reveals itself slowly. Watson's subtle surfaces evoke landscape and the elements. Her forms sit quietly but not without presence.

Brett Stone says, 'living with handmade bowls makes you more aware of what you put in them. My bowls are functional, simple and unadorned - they want to be used.' Nevertheless, the sculptural integrity of Stone's stacks makes them more than just useful.

Eloise Rankine, a young artist and recent NAS graduate, throws then carves Southern Ice porcelain to create delicate pieces influenced by her interest in textiles.

Donna Green kneads her vessels with fingers, fists, chin and elbow to produce her molten forms. Green, based in New York, has just had a successful solo exhibition at McClain Gallery in Houston, Texas.

Glenn Barkley's exuberant creations are filled with references to ceramic history - from Iznik pottery to Korean moon jars. Barkley's star is on the rise, and he has been selected to exhibit in the 2016 Adelaide Biennial of Art: Magic Object which opens at the end of February.

The opening of 'Clay 3' on the evening of Wednesday 3 will also celebrate the reopening of the 2 Danks Street galleries after a summer break.

For further information, including interview requests and high-res images, contact Chloe Watson:

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Donna Green, 2015, Blackbird, clay, 54 x 27 x 27cm