

EXHIBITION ADVISORY

Exhibition: *Making in Between: Queer Clay*

On View: May 6—December 30, 2023

Reception: May 6, 2023, 4:00 pm – 6:00pm • Opening Remarks @ 4:30 pm

Location: American Museum of Ceramic Art, Pomona, CA



Pictured: Howard Kottler, *An Eye for an Eye*, 1981, detail. Porcelain, decals, luster. Collection of Paul Kotula Projects, Photo by P.D. Rearick.

(Pomona, CA—April 11, 2023) Opening May 6, 2023, *Making in Between: Queer Clay* (MIB: *Queer Clay*) will be the second major exhibition in the American Museum of Ceramic Art's *Making in Between* series. The series brings together works by artists doing intersectional work and exploring common themes of identity, culture, and community. In 2020, *Making in Between: Contemporary Chinese American Ceramics* featured works by six first- and second-generation artists who shared themes of cultural heritage, identity, language, politics, migration, and displacement.

As *MIB: Queer Clay* shifts the lens of the *Making in Between* series from national heritage to explore broader influences on identity, it centers queerness as an unapologetic presence. Mounting an exhibition that focuses solely on work by queer artists, AMOCA brings less familiar narratives to the forefront of ceramics. *MIB: Queer Clay* will feature works by historical artists, whose identities have remained largely unseen until recently, alongside contemporary makers.

Executive Director Beth Ann Gerstein commented, “We are grateful to the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pasadena Arts Alliance, and the Los Angeles County Arts Commission for their critical support in making this exhibition possible. *Queer Clay* takes the opportunity to go beyond just presenting LGBTQ+ work; instead, the exhibition invites viewers into an ongoing visual conversation about material, identity, and innovative practices in ceramics. This exhibition is especially significant as it presents a deliberate gathering of pieces created by queer artists, emphasizing the group’s undeniable contributions to the larger art field.”

Co-curator Pam Aliaga shares, “the goal of this exhibition is to have the public understand how queer and trans voices have always dared to be at the forefront of western history. Especially in the field of ceramics, cisgender male artists have been attributed particular greatness and subsequently reinforced a toxic perception of masculinity in the field. It's important we understand how the artists [in *Queer Clay*] are looking beyond the gender norms and discussing topics of culture, politics, and community that influence their work, along with who they are. Such empowerment is a vital step, and in *Queer Clay* AMOCA not only shares spectacular ceramic art with visitors, but also pushes American museums toward a richer and more inclusive practice.”

Exhibition Overview

When looking for community, we often rely on visual markers to find those similar to us. In the 1940s, queer individuals would identify like-minded people by asking if you were a “friend of Dorothy.” In the 1980s, the handkerchief code helped gay men distinguish what to expect from sexual encounters. Art continues to act as another extension for queer artists to represent themselves.

Mounting an exhibition focusing solely on work by queer artists, AMOCA brings often-sidelined narratives to the forefront of ceramics. Exhibiting artists are Sascha Brastoff (1917-1993), Howard Kottler (1930-1989), Mark Burns (b. 1950), Grayson Perry (b. 1960), Ramekon O’Arwisters (b.1960), Larry Buller (b. 1961), Julia Kunin (b.1961), Vick Quezada (b. 1979), Nicki Green (b. 1986), Alex Anderson (b. 1990), Karla Ekatherine Canseco (b. 1995), and Tamara Santibanez (b. 1987). Presented together for the first time, these works exemplify the compelling contributions of LGBTQ+ artists to the western art canon.

Complementing the in-person exhibition experience, numerous public and educational programs will be mounted, including lectures, artist conversations, college-level tours, and tours for Title 1 schools serving grades K-12. An accompanying illustrated exhibition catalog will be produced.

Exhibition Credits

Making in Between: Queer Clay is co-curated by Beth Ann Gerstein and Pam Aliaga.

The exhibition is accompanied by a catalog designed by SAALT Press, featuring full-color images and new essays by Matthew Limb, Alexis Salas, Richard May, Steve Conti, Beth Ann Gerstein, and Pam Aliaga.

This exhibition and catalog are funded, in part, by grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Pasadena Arts Alliance, and The LA County Department of Arts & Culture.

The exhibition will be featured on the Museum's website, as well on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter using the hashtag #QueerClay.

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April 11, 2023

CALENDAR LISTING

Making in Between: Queer Clay opens at the American Museum of Ceramic Art, 399 N Garey Ave, Pomona, CA 91767 on May 6, 2023, 4-6 pm with opening remarks at 4:30pm. The exhibition runs through December 30, 2023. The museum is open Friday-Sunday, 11am to 4pm. For more information:

<https://www.amoca.org/upcoming-exhibitions/queer-clay/> or (909) 865-3146 or communications@amoca.org.

Credit

This exhibition is organized by the American Museum of Ceramic Art.

About AMOCA

The American Museum of Ceramic Art was founded in 2003, in Pomona, California. The mission of the museum is to champion the art, history, creation, and technology of ceramics through exhibitions, collections, outreach, and studio programming.

Museum Hours

Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, 11am – 4pm

Admission

General \$14, Senior \$9, Student/Pomona Resident \$7, Members & under 12 Free

Location

American Museum of Ceramic Art
399 North Garey Avenue, Pomona, CA 91767
(909) 865-3146 • www.amoca.org

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