

David Hicks: Seed

January 9 - February 13, 2021

Gallery hours by appointment: Tuesday - Saturday, 10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Diane Rosenstein Gallery is pleased to present *Seed*, an exhibition of ceramics and drawings by David Hicks. This is Hicks' first solo exhibition with the gallery. This body of work is closely connected to the landscape surrounding Hicks' studio and home in Central San Joaquin Valley, a largely agricultural area in California. The artist writes,

While not tethered to a focused realism of nature's shapes and natural development, my approach is more a loose conversation with natural form; one that addresses my interpretations of growth, irregularity and the movements of nature.

David Hicks' multifaceted terracotta works 'grow' up and around the space in which they are installed. In some, dozens of unique elements are assembled into a steel armature that acts as a wall-mounted frame, or as a freestanding branch-and-root system on which the ceramic objects appear as a kind of fruit. Dionysian 'Offerings' take the artist's maximalist approach to an extreme, depicting heaping plates of vegetal forms—some rising four feet high off the floor—doused in thick glazes, often captured in mid-drip. Plant-like forms also appear as small talismanic objects the artist calls 'Clippings'. In places, the forms appear more bodily, like heads or organs, offering a reminder that we, too, are a part of the landscape.

Nearly all the works in *Seed* wear glazes that are deeply and heavily layered, with cracks, flakes, crusts, and drips that reveal each object's history in and out of the kiln. The artist describes the glazing process as alchemical, akin to cooking by taste rather than by recipe. Some colors arise repeatedly through what he calls a 'resurrection' — electric yellows, creamy turquoises, and burnt oranges that are created anew for each work, the recipe never recorded or exactly repeated.

The installation will include a series of pastel, ink, and charcoal abstract drawings. Where Hicks' sculptures call to mind fruiting and harvest, these drawings return us to earlier points in nature's cycle: germination and flowering. Seedlings thrum with energy beneath the soil's dark surface, and floral shapes burst forth as in early spring. Like in the sculptural work, certain repeated shapes allow for reflection on how our own bodies fit into the natural order. Vertically sprouting seeds, for example, look strikingly like a crowd of figures. In the artist's words, "there is a familial relation found in [the organic shapes] as they oddly present an allegorical reflection of self and life, as well as help explain the passage of time."

David Hicks: Seed will be on view from January 9 – February 13, 2021. The gallery is open by appointment only, Tuesday through Saturday, 10am – 6pm.

David Hicks (USA, b.1977) is an artist who lives and works in his hometown of Visalia, California. He received a BFA in Ceramic Arts from California State University Long Beach (CSULB) in 2003, and an MFA in Ceramics from Alfred University in New York in 2006. Hicks' sculptural work can be found in public and private collections such as the Boise Museum of Art in Boise, ID, the American Museum of Ceramic Art in Pomona, CA, and the U.S. Department of State's Art in Embassies Collection in Washington, DC.

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