

Patrick Jackson

Liquid Clay

February 4 - March 4, 2023

François Ghebaly presents *Liquid Clay*, a sculptural installation by Patrick Jackson. The exhibition is made up of two visually opposing bodies of work: a series of custom-designed crystal-clear shelving units stocked with commercial products, and a series of hand sculpted wall reliefs. The shelves, cold and processed, differ starkly from the reliefs, which are raw, intimate, and show evidence of human touch. *Liquid Clay* is the culmination of these two bodies of work, which have been developed over the years.

Upon entering the gallery, seven freestanding shelving units are installed throughout the space, each built using clear acrylic columns that are shaped like a "soft pyramid." These hollow pyramids were produced through an injection molding process. They are set between horizontal sheets of glass and alternately flipped up and down, resulting in pillars reminiscent of Brancusi's *Endless Column*. The shelving units are scaled to a human body and its personal space. Each shelving unit holds a specific category of product: bathroom towels, teddy bears, shoes, clothing, electronics, dishes and cookware. The shelves are barely perceptible; the objects set upon them gain a heightened presence as they seem to float. The look is similar to the approach of online retailers and advertisers, who photograph objects against all white or black backgrounds. These shelving units attempt to eliminate physicality.

Sharply contrasting to the shelving units in shape, color and mode of making, twelve reliefs line the walls. They come from three periods of production: 2016, 2019 and 2022. Jackson first shapes them horizontally in a wooden box, each scaled to the reach of his sculpting arm in width and depth. He uses a water-based clay called WED, which stands for Walt E. Disney. Disney's Imagineers developed this material, a smooth and malleable clay, to sculpt three-dimensional cartoon figures. Jackson makes latex molds of the originals and produces final casts in polymerized gypsum.

Guttural and gargoyle-like, the reliefs show details of bodies and related forms: hands, feet, ears, tongues, teeth, mouths, knots, bricks, folds, curtains and cuts. Based on 25 years of drawings from Jackson's sketchbooks, particular body forms resurface over and over again. One of these compositions is a dungeon inside an ear that sits inside a mouth; another depicts cartoonish feet protruding from stone sun beams. There is a knotted hand emerging from closed curtains. Two knuckles open like eyelids. Jackson understands these reliefs as his subconscious iconography.

Liquid Clay will inaugurate the gallery's new Hollywood location, a 3,000 square foot exhibition space that complements the gallery's decade-long presence in Downtown Los Angeles. Following the exhibition, the space will close for renovations, reopening in the fall. Jackson's installation inhabits the building in its aged and worn condition, drawing on its past as a product warehouse.

Patrick Jackson (b. 1978) is a Los Angeles-born artist known for his sculptural installations and clay based work. He earned his BFA at the San Francisco Art Institute and his MFA at the University of Southern California. Jackson is a recipient of the 2022 Guggenheim Fellowship. He was included in the Made in L.A. 2020 Biennial where he presented sculptural installations at the Hammer Museum and the Huntington Library. On multiple occasions Jackson has presented site-specific projects in his apartment complex, transforming the living space into psychologically loaded environments. Solo projects include François Ghebaly, Los Angeles (2020, 2016, 2013, 2008); Kristina Kite Gallery, Los Angeles (2018); the Wattis Institute for Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (2017); Gallerie Vallois, Paris (2015) and Nicole Klagsbrun Gallery, New York (2010). *Liquid Clay* is his fifth solo presentation with François Ghebaly.

François Ghebaly