

WATER & EARTH

水与土

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Jasmine LITTLE 杰思敏·莉特
Jay KVAPIL 杰·柯彼

CONTEMPORARY CERAMICS & PAINTINGS
当代陶瓷与绘画

Galerie Dumonteil (Shanghai)
杜梦堂 (上海)



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LEFEBVRE & FILS
CONTEMPORARY ART CERAMICS

Water & Earth
Jasmine Little & Jay Kvapil
Dual solo exhibition

Dates: 16th March to 14th April, 2018

Venue: Galerie Dumonteil

Address: Building 105, 199 Hengshan Road, 200031 Shanghai

Opening Hours: 11:00 a.m.-7:00 p.m., Closed on Sunday and Monday

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On March 15, 2018, Galerie Dumonteil (Shanghai) is pleased to present “Water & Earth” for this upcoming spring season. This project is the first collaboration between Galerie Dumonteil and Lefebvre & Fils, a visionary French gallery specialized in contemporary ceramics. This dual solo exhibition of American artists Jasmine Little and Jay Kvapil showcases over 20 ceramic installations and nearly 10 paintings.

Water and earth the two central elements of ceramic art have been adapted and merged into an expressive contemporary language. These two elements also serve as the source of inspiration for both artists. In the works of Little and Kvapil, ceramics is interpreted in two different ways – an extension of a female body versus the experimental exploration of the material itself.

Jasmine Little: A Woman's Body Projected to Ceramics

Jasmine Little is a new sharp contemporary artist who is born and grown in the United States with an early focus on the artistic mediums by paintings, ink and watercolour. However, after her first experimentation with sculptural ceramics, she decided to develop her artistic approach towards ceramics, leading to this unfamiliar exploration in medium. In 2017, she participated in an art residency organised by Louis Lefebvre & Fils in Versailles, which firmed her direction into the creation of contemporary ceramic art.

Jasmine Little once said: “The theme of my artwork is woman as presented in art and water.” In her vision, the body tends to act as a connection projected into her artworks, which includes her exclusive sensitivity and delicacy as a female artist, meanwhile reflecting her awareness of women’s identity and figure. The long-term focus on the subject of water and nature occupies an important position in her creation and practice as well. Her stay at Versailles was a revelation: Little was immediately enticed by the

royal park and its fountains. The secret groves of Versailles and the labyrinths of greenery fascinated Little and responded to her intimate inner-world.

During her stay in Versailles, Jasmine Little produced total of 20 ceramic installations and 10 pieces of paintings. This series of artworks combines the style of the fauvism and symbolism with a feminist view of symbiosis between nature and art. The exhibition showcases pieces of ceramic works that appear to be slightly rough at first sight with female body partially hidden or present in the extension of different shapes, creating an interesting visual contrast. The ceramic works embrace a bold rich colorful glaze, while the paintings hold the unique ceramic expression of the contemporary art, and both carry a unique Jasmine Little signature style.

In addition to ceramics, painting is also an important part of the creation to the artist. This exhibition displays many pieces of Jasmine Little's watercolour and oil paintings, among which features her representative work "Dry Weather" (2017). The gracefully naked female bodies in the picture are intertwined as a group of doe lost in the forest in a dry weather against the blue background by the side of fountain. Compared to her ceramic creation, Little's paintings are more graceful, revealing a simple primitive style. Working between ceramics and painting, Little learn from both and draw inspiration from one to apply on the other. Her practice does not limit to the use of material, the expression of nature or the usual mindset on women.

Jay Kvapil: Experiment and Exploration of the Ceramics

Jay Kvapil, also from United States, is an artist with rich background in art theory learning and teaching background. While studying philosophy and literature at university, Jay Kvapil began to use clay to create. After graduating from college, he went to Japan to study tea ceremony ceramics, and later moved to the East-West art system, after decades focusing on exploring of ceramic creation and experiment.

Oriental culture is undoubtedly one of the most important elements in the artist's creation. Japanese aesthetics is presented in a modern style on a clever scale, which gives the ceramic works a simple and elegant aesthetic taste. However, what is even more crucial to Jay Kvapil's artwork is his experimentation with the ceramic material itself. The artist went deeply into the heart of the pottery process and the core of ceramic history, devoting much time to bold experiments with glaze and enamel. Therefore, traditional ceramic creation has translated into a philosophical thinking and literary expression. In the view of Jay Kvapil, ceramic creation itself is to explore the relationship between form and material, beauty, ugliness and tension.

Most of the exhibiting works are created in the last five years. The artist found his inspiration in landscapes of his birth place in Arizona, where vast desert landscapes

coexist with intimate pictorial space found in small rocks and stones. Some of the pieces have an obvious horizon line, giving them a distant landscape, while others depict an intimate landscape in travel — whether literally or imaginatively. The use of glaze in his artworks has been experimentally exploited with random characteristics. The truth is that his approach to glaze formulation is more similar to that of a cook rather than that of a chemist, for adding pinch of this or that to reach the desired result and always keeping open minded to an unconventional dream land.

With his never-ending pursuit for the origin of the art language, Jay Kvapil shared, “I only make pottery, and I am not keen to list it into ceramic art or porcelain sculpture. My artworks are just natural simple pottery, and I prefer this pure attitude which went with my ancestors, forming it into a working language, and if my work become successful, I prefer to imagine that it is a kind of dialogue between my ceramic art predecessors and the younger generations.

More Possibilities for Ceramics as a Contemporary Art Language

Driven by the diversification of contemporary art, along with the development of modern technology, ceramic artists continue to explore the virgin land and challenge the boundary of materials, techniques, concepts. They test different texture effects, research new soil formulations, pottery firing methods. In the meantime, they also seek for “the forgotten jade” in the riverbed of history and approaches to reinvigorate life.

Jasmine Little and Jay Kvapil are such practitioners. For the first time, Dumonteil juxtaposed the artworks of two artists in one gallery space similar to how "water" and "earth" blend in ceramic artworks, contradictory and inseparable, presenting the possibilities of extending the traditional ceramic material in contemporary art practice. Introducing the practice of US ceramic artists to the Chinese market is a stepping stone into the world of contemporary ceramic art. The exhibition intends to offer Chinese visitors and collectors a new vision of ceramics and a multi-dimensional approach of the ancient art form that has blossomed in China for thousands of years. Dumonteil looks forward to providing Chinese art market and academy with a path of exploration and appreciation for the new latitude of ceramic arts.

About Gallery

Founded in Paris in 1982 by Pierre and Dothi Dumonteil, the connoisseur and art expert in 20th and 21st century sculpture and painting, Galerie Dumonteil is regarded as one of the leading forces in the art market of twentieth century's figurative sculpture by representing several modern artists' estates while collaborating with a group of living artists.

The first location of the gallery is established in 1982 at 38 rue de l'Université on the left bank of Paris, this venue is still the headquarter of the gallery until today. In 2008, Pierre and Dothi Dumonteil opened its first international space in Shanghai. After more than 20 years of involvement in the North American art market, the gallery inaugurated an expanded New York space located at 475 Park Avenue in November 2012.

Regularly collaborating with museums and organizing solo exhibitions featuring artists who were active between the 1930s and 1970s, Galerie Dumonteil dedicates itself to the discovery and rediscovery of artists working in the theme of animal and nature. The gallery works closely with artists' families and estates, with some of the collaborations lasting over 30 years. The gallery has featured artists such as François Pompon, Georges-Lucien Guyot, Rembrandt Bugatti, Diego Giacometti, Charles Artus, Marcel Deryn, Pablo Picasso, Armand Petersen and Joseph Czaky.

Over the past twenty years, the gallery has gradually involved itself in contemporary art and design. The visionary founders, Pierre and Dothi Dumonteil, have fostered talents among contemporary artists by supporting and encouraging them to fulfill their ambitious projects. Today, Daniel Daviau, Jean-Marie Fiori, Eric Pillot, Jean-Claude Meynard, Rubén Fuentes, Hubert le Gall and Wang Keping, with their roster of artists, share the three gallery spaces in Paris, Shanghai and New York.

Galerie Dumonteil is a member of the Carré Rive Gauche, Compagnie Nationale des Experts and Syndicat National des Antiquaires. Furthermore, Galerie Dumonteil participates in the significant international art fairs each year: La Biennale des Antiquaires (Paris) since 1992, the PAD (Paris, London, Geneva) since 1998 and the Fine Art Asia Hong Kong since 2010 among others.

The new gallery space in Shanghai will reinforce the relationship between European and the Asian art scene. A program of thematic and academic exhibitions featuring both modern and contemporary art will start from this September in order to promote artworks executed by phenomenal artists from the dawn of the 20th Century up to today. Galerie Dumonteil Shanghai also works closely with in-house research team to publish and translate artists' catalogue raisonné in China.