

Donna Green:
At Last, No More

January 12 – February 24, 2024
Opening Reception with the artist: January 12, 6 - 8 pm

HB381 is pleased to announce *At Last, No More*, an exhibition of new ceramic sculptures and drawings by New York-based artist Donna Green (Australian, b. 1960). Green wrestles with coils of stoneware, manipulating and prodding to create anthropomorphic gestural shapes that burst and stretch into space. Her physical experimentation challenges the properties of the clay, resulting in works that seem to be in a constant state of growth and transfiguration; heroically scaled urns undulate and drip with layer upon layer of glaze.

The artist and writer Janelle Lynch has contributed an essay on Green's work, excerpted below:

"It's taken me a long time to get here, but this is what I want to do. I want to make sculptures," she told me. In fact, Green has wanted to create sculpture all along, but because of the onus she has felt to make utilitarian objects and to hew to antiquated ideas of gender, she has created objects with a purpose. Now she is asserting—foremost to herself—that she, too, can build nonfunctional closed forms. This presents a new view on the shapes that relate to male and female sexual anatomy that have appeared in Green's work in recent years. Until now they have suggested sexual liberation, but the creation of breast-like and phallic forms has also been part of her process of declaring herself an artist. An additional part of that process has been eschewing notions of open vessels signifying the female body and function, and closed or towering forms signifying the male body and sculpture. For Green, "They can be either. The piece itself is the guide." What is essential to her is that the work is alive. "I want it to have a lot of energy—to epitomize life in an energetic way. That's my goal."

Green's embrace of her identity as an artist is also evident in oil stick drawings on canvas and ink drawings on watercolor paper. Dense with meandering lines and punctuated by fiery marks, the oil stick drawings are Green's interpretations of nature surrounding her Water Mill studio. Sometimes the drawings serve as a landscape she views as she builds her sculptures. Open and fluid, black and white, Green creates the ink drawings with one continuous gesture forming organic shapes. She sometimes makes both the oil stick and ink drawings with her eyes closed, reveling in touch, materials, the arc of her arm, the movement of her body. The drawing methods seem to allow space for different facets of Green's personality—ardent and determined, graceful and elegant.

While her work is enriched by her biography, it is equally imbued with art history. Green was raised in a family with a deep appreciation for art, and for much of her life she has looked at it

with a fervor similar to that which drives her own creative practice. The clay works in the exhibition draw inspiration from the coiled funerary vessels from Japan's Jōmon period (c. 14,000 – 300 BCE) and figurative Haniwa tomb sculpture of the Kofun period (c. 300 – 710 CE). The form at the top of Green's untitled 2023 vessel pays homage to Silla urns from Korea's Three Kingdoms period (c. 57 BCE – 676 CE). The oil stick and ink drawings reference Joan Mitchell's and Emily Kame Kngwarreye's lively abstract paintings.

Donna Green earned a Bachelor of Arts in Industrial Design in 1984 from Sydney College of the Arts in New South Wales. In 1985, Green moved to New York and joined *Industrial Design Magazine* as one of its editors. She began working in clay in 1988, studying at Greenwich House Pottery and the New School in New York, and in 1997 at the National Art School, Sydney. Green has participated in numerous workshops including "Fire Up," 1995 with Janet Mansfield in Gulgong, New South Wales, working on-site with Danish artists Nina Hole and Jorgen Hansen, and "The Vessel as Metaphor" in 2018 with Tony Marsh at Anderson Ranch Arts Center, Snowmass, CO. In 2019, she was a Resident Artist at California State University Long Beach. Later that year, she undertook an Artist Fellowship at Greenwich House Pottery. Green has exhibited at Hostler Burrows, New York, NY and Los Angeles, CA; McClain Gallery, Houston, TX; Greenwich House Pottery, New York, NY; Utopia Art Sydney, Australia; SIZED Studio, Los Angeles, CA; and the Leiber Collection, East Hampton, NY. Her work is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences, Sydney, Australia. Green lives and works in New York.