



SAVE THE DATE

BRIAN ROCHEFORT

« LOVE LETTER »

October 17 - November 26, 2016

Opening on Monday, October 17, 2016
Cocktail from 6pm to 9pm

Galerie Lefebvre & Fils
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“*Surface Tension*” by Blaire Dessent

Like the simmering crater of an active volcano, Brian Rochefort’s sculptural ceramics are fraught with unexpected surface tension. Applying layers of slip and glaze on hand formed vessels and then firing them repeatedly to create an extreme crackle effect to the point where they frequently explode, the resulting cups, vessels and wall pieces reveal vibrant colors, fissures, density and textures that at times seem to ooze off the surface. Some of his work, energy gloops as he refers to them, seem like they could be samples taken from an eruption site, as if they were dusted off to reveal some sort of ancient chalice caked in freakishly colored lava. Take a microscope and go down a rabbit hole into the depths of the details found in the yellows, whites, grays, blues, pinks, dots, stripes, and chunks that could suggest the earth’s strata, or the magical flora that hides deep within nature.



Rochefort is not an environmental artist per se, but he has a deeply personal and physical connection to the earth. For more than a decade he has worked non stop with clay. Using the cylinder vessel form and its lumpier relations, as a canvas for developing his very painterly, expressionist surfaces that reflect his interest in artists such as Willem de Kooning, Yayoi Kusama and Kazuo Shiraga, he has more recently been exploring his medium as a way of grasping, connecting, and challenging the landscape, and the both the powerful and fragile beauty of the earth. Growing up playing in the woods of Rhode Island, followed by a couple of years living under the vast skies of Montana, and more recently through frequent travels to places such as the Galapagos, the ATM Caves in Belize, New Mexico and Ecuador, the landscape is seeping into Rochefort’s work. It is becoming earthier in a sense, without compromising its individual experimental-ness.

For many artists, the landscape has a way of sneaking up on them and getting into their headspace; Whether an urban-scape, such as with Piet Mondrian when he came to New York City and went boogie-woogie, or Utah and the American West’s influence on Robert Smithson for example. In Rochefort’s case it remains more fragmented and poetic. You see the landscape, but you don’t. He himself sees it as a sort of love letter to these magnificent places which are slowly evaporating or being infringed upon, rather than an attempt to explain it or dominate it. His nearly transcendent experiences in remote locales like the deep forests of Tikal in Guatemala, have left him with a sense of responsibility as well. How can our own individual actions affect the larger world?

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Though he was referring to the state of literature at the time, Irish author Samuel Beckett once said in an interview, “To find a form that accommodates the mess, that is the task of the artist now.” In many ways Brian Rochefort uses ceramics to try and get a handle on the mess of the world, not in any preachy way, but as a way to understand it and as attempt to honor and bring an awareness to the beauty as well as the tragedy that is still there in the mess, and there is an urgency in understanding this mess. His repetitive and layered process, the very physical energy that is put into each piece, and which is contained within each piece, is like a study in controlled chaos, a balance between freedom and constraint, creation and devastation.



With a sincere appreciation for ceramics and its history, Rochefort subverts the very medium he loves in order to open it up into something other. He pushes the extremes, transforming the object into something nearly alien, without specific form or function, but rather the results of action and manipulation. “The dialectic between place and change can provide the kind of no-one’s-land where artists thrive,” states critic and activist Lucy Lippard in her introduction to her 1997 book the “Lure of the Local” and it seems as if Rochefort is coming into this zone, where creativity is flowing through the right channels.

Brian Rochefort graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design in 2007. He was awarded the Lillian Fellowship from the Archie Bray Foundation for Ceramic Arts in Montana, 2007-2008. He currently lives and works in Los Angeles. For the last six weeks he has been living and working at the Residency in the suburbs of Versailles. This is his first solo show in Paris.

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LEFEBVRE & FILS GALLERY

135 years of existence, 135 years of expertise, of profound knowledge of objects, good taste and a good eye, of exchanges with museums curators and unbreakable links made with private collectors. Immobilism was not one of their value and the members of the Lefebvre family knew exactly how to discover and propose very refined objects and works for a cosmopolitan and international clientele.

It is therefore completely natural that since 2009, Lefebvre & Fils Gallery has started to pose a new perspective on ceramics, in particular contemporary ceramics, with the leitmotiv to show the real permanence and the perpetual renewal of this medium.

Since 2009, Lefebvre & Fils Gallery has shown works by well known contemporary artists such as Ettore Sottsass, Ron Nagle and most recently Beverly Semmes, however she also engages in promoting the young artistic scene with exhibitions by Brie Ruais, Robin Cameron or Jennie Jieun Lee.



From practical and common objects of the previous centuries, today we have works of art in the real sense of the term. If the gesture continues, the artistic scope is completely different. The idea of a container or a domestic object disappears in favour of a dialogue between the artist still modeling it and the artistic intention he gives it.

THE RESIDENCY

Following his family's strong desire to show and promote skills both ancestral and allowing the creation of unique and complexe works of art, Louis Lefebvre opened last september an artist's residency in Versailles: *The Residency*.

Situated in the ancient music pavilion of Madame Elisabeth, 'Princesse du sang', sister of King Louis XVI, the Residency is dedicated to the arts of fire.

The artists have a studio at their disposal and a stay from 6 weeks to 3 months, each resident receiving a solo show at the gallery. It has begun with Ulrika Strömbäck whose exhibition started on January 21st, 2016 and will be followed by many artists in 2016-2017...demonstrating that Lefebvre & Fils Gallery is opening a new chapter and that the story continues...



THE RESIDENCY

PROGRAM 2016 - 2017 // THE RESIDENCY

Eric Croes
Shoshi Kanokohata
Joakim Ojanen
Cammie Staros
Julia Haft-Candell
Daniel Firman

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