

LEFEBVRE & FILS

CONTEMPORARY ART CERAMICS

presents

KIRK MANGUS

1952 - 2013

November 30 - December 3, 2022



NADA MIAMI

Booth 5.01

NADA Miami
Nov 30 - Dec 3
2022
Ice Palace
Studios

20th Edition

Life On the Streets, 1986
Stoneware, colored slips, sgraffito drawing, salt glazed
46 x 24 x 20 in.
116,8 x 60 x 50,8 cm

KIRK MANGUS / NADA MIAMI

1952 - 2013

November 30 - December 3, 2022

The Lefebvre et Fils gallery is honoured and pleased to present Kirk Mangus's ceramic works at NADA Miami in December 2022.

Man Gus

Interludes with a Unicorn

It was a sunny afternoon in 1998 and it wouldn't be long before I had to drive Kirk back to LAX so that he could fly home to Ohio. I was growing anxious. I had invited Kirk to Long Beach State to paint 2 large wall murals in one of the entries of our newly renovated ceramics facility. He had been in the building all morning and was holding court with students, telling stories & jokes, I could hear intermittent bursts of group laughter down the hall. I was starting to wonder if there was enough time for this to happen and then Kirk abruptly decided to start working.

He taped a fat carpenter's pencil to the end of a broom stick, stood back 3 feet and like a shaman filled both walls with loose beautiful sketches that would become the framework for his painting. He switched the pencil out for a cheap 3inch brush, dipped it in a bucket of diluted black acrylic and went to work confidently, quickly. It was a masterful display. Both walls were completed in what seemed like an hour.

Whether on the wall or the side of a pot or piece of paper, Kirk built energetic complex images, a matrix of enigmatic characters dropped into imaginary landscapes, a lineup of the usual suspects, assorted invented and mythological creatures who found a home in his art and perhaps in his dreams.

Whether sketching, throwing on the potter's wheel, painting, carving or sculpting Kirk was deeply focused, did not second guess decisions much, worked with a speed that kept his hands ahead of his ability to intellectualize and in rhythms that seemed designed to move him toward a state of transcendence. It connected him with intuitive creative energy as a maker.

I have walked by his murals almost every day since he finished them and I am still processing what Kirk's art and Kirk mean to me as an artist and friend. And yes, of course we made it to the airport with plenty of time to spare.

I spend a summer with Kirk & Eva in Kent working in the studio as part of their annual "Blossom" workshop. The studio looked like a cyclone hit it, the kind of creative chaos I enjoy. I sat with Kirk one day talking about something at his densely cluttered office desk which in a way was part of the studio matrix, perhaps it looked like that famous image of Einstein's desk, a diagram for an unruly brilliant mind. There were tools, drawings, notes, official university paperwork, books, projects, old food, empties and god knows what else all covered in a layer of fine dust like an undisturbed Pompeii tomb.

I sat close and as we spoke in a "Kirk Mangus conversation salad" kind of way, he deftly reached under his wood desk and pulled out of a very small kiln a hot, very small but remarkable "palm of the hand" sized rapidly pinched bowl that had been painted with a palette knife and thick impasto over-glaze enamel. It was already beautiful but he added more enamel as we chatted and joked and it went back into the kiln.

Did I mention he fired a kiln under a wood desk?

That moment was emblematic for me of the how Kirk had hybridized making art and teaching seamlessly. It was the only way to work with as much rigor as he did and be the present teacher that he was for so many. I went to his house later in the day and saw another 80 + such small works. It was astonishing and reminded me of the remarkably prolific American author, poet and physician of 40 years Williams Carlos Williams who was said to have done most of his writing while at his office desk on prescription slips and on a pop up typewriter between patient visits.

Kirk Mangus was a unicorn who signed his work Man Gus with gusto, who understood how to make people feel embraced or off balance as he chose. A polymath who was philosophical in his pursuits of pottery, sculpture, drawing & painting and as an educator. He was a devoted teacher who modeled a brand of artistic behavior that was powerful, he was known to write a poem to a student about art & life following critiques perhaps as way to clarify a point, smooth over ruffled feathers or just let them know he cared. Kirk mentored, influenced and touched numerous artists in his sphere and of his generation.

Galerie Lefebvre & Fils
24, rue du bac - 75007 Paris
www.lefebvre-et-fils.fr

KIRK MANGUS / NADA MIAMI

1952 - 2013

November 30 - December 3, 2022

It is important to note that Kirk was REMARKABLY prolific, he traveled, taught and created art extensively in Asia & Europe. He left much of what he made wherever he worked. I know because I ran into it multiple times in my travels. I once bought a small bowl in a Korean pottery gallery 6000 miles from home and I knew it was Kirk's immediately upon seeing it in a cluttered shop. Who else might paint a full city engulfed in flames on one half of a small handmade bowl and a pair of goofy monsters on the other half?

Kirk was exceedingly generous, perhaps to a fault. There were many reasons why he made what he made and he worked between life size figurative sculpture and "palm of hand" scale pottery. Those small pots kept Kirk in motion artistically like a shark that needs to swim to generate oxygen and they were frequently offered like the jewels that they were, as sweet gifts of affection to those around him.

Kirk was deeply interested in film, poetry, literature and issues related to pop & counter culture at large. Articulate, eloquent or oratorical when he chose to be, he might also slip into grunting and speaking in a clipped caveman-like cadence to make a point or simply to entertain.

Mangus was exuberant in art and life. His work with clay was technically superb, he worked hard however to not allow his work to be simply about his technical virtuosity. He was fluent in wood, salt & soda firing and in high and low fire aesthetic strategies. He was a skilled and knowledgeable kiln builder who built numerous assorted kilns. He also designed clay bodies and glaze recipes. He had an insatiable appetite for hard work. It was once said that a piece of pottery is truly great when you can feel the joy of the maker in the pot. Kirk is so uniquely & powerfully present in what he made, art was a rigorous celebration, a communion and life long process of self-actualization for him. His artistic influences were fascinating and encyclopedic and ranged from American counter culture cartooning to Song dynasty figural tomb ceramics, common Choson dynasty tableware, American jug pottery, German expressionist wood cuts and much more. There is at times a sense of deep history, the contemporary moment and a timelessness in his art.

I don't think Kirk enjoyed the professional recognition his talent deserved. Gallerist at times found him too complicated to work with. The artistic output of Kirk Mangus established a formidable body of contemporary American ceramic art. I am always grateful when he receives notice and his remarkable ceramics is foregrounded or given a platform.

Had Kirk lived another ten to fifteen years and mastered social media, his influence and presence within the field and beyond would have been incalculable in my opinion, his artistic voice that powerful. He was extraordinarily talented and an original messenger well ahead of his moment.

Kirk Mangus was a valued friend and a co-conspirator in art on numerous occasions until his passing in 2013. He left a mark and has been sorely missed.

Tony Marsh
Long Beach CA, 2022

KIRK MANGUS / NADA MIAMI

1952 - 2013

November 30 - December 3, 2022

EDUCATION

1977—1979

MFA, Washington State University, Pullman

1973—1976

Earth, Air, Fire and Water Summer Workshops, Grass Valley, CA

1971—1975

BFA, Rhode Island School of Design, Providence

1969—1972

Summer Workshops, Penland School of Crafts, NC

SOLOSHOWS (SELECTED)

2014

Things Love, Museum of Contemporary Art
Cleveland, OH

2012

Dog Tales — New Drawings and Ceramics, Canton
Museum of Art, OH

2008

Heads, Eells Gallery, Blossom Music Center,
Cuyahoga Falls, OH

2005

University of Texas at Brownsville, TX

1997

Wood-Fired Ceramics, William Busta Gallery,
Cleveland, OH

1996

Recent Drawings, McDonough Museum of Art,
Youngstown, OH

1994

Recent Monoprints, Southern Illinois University at
Edwardsville, IL

1993

Ceramics & Drawings, Hyundai Gallery, Seoul, Korea

1992

Illinois Wesleyan University, Bloomington

1989

Femmes, Demons & Drawings, St. Mary's College,
Notre Dame, IN

1988

Manchester Craftsman's Guild, Pittsburgh, PA

1986

Works from 1980-1986, University of Akron, OH

1983

Pewabic Pottery, Detroit, MI

1977

New Work, The Clay Place, Pittsburgh, PA

COLLECTIONS

Amsterdam Municipal Collection, The Netherlands

Archie Bray Foundation, Helena, MT

Arizona State University Art Museum, Tempe, AZ

Benedictine Park, Vilnius, Lithuania

BW Rogers, Akron, OH

Canton Art Museum, Canton, OH

Carleton College, Northfield, MN

Panevesys Civic Art Gallery, Panevesys, Lithuania

The Clay Studio, Philadelphia, PA

Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH

Cranbrook Art Museum, Bloomfield Hills, MI

DeYoung Museum, Sandy Besser Collection, San
Francisco, CA

Eli & Edythe Broad Art Museum, Michigan State University,
MI

The Fabric Workshop, Philadelphia, PA

Finnish Craft Museum, Helsinki, Finland

Frederick Weisman Museum of Art, University of Minnesota,
Minneapolis, MN

Gerry Eskin Ceramics Collection, University of Iowa
Museum of Art, Iowa City, IA

Inchon World Ceramics Center, Suwon, Kyonggi Province,
KOREA
Jinro International Ceramics Workshop, Seoul,
KOREA

John Sinker Study Collection, Michigan State University,
East Lansing, MI

The School of Art Gallery, Kent State University, Kent, OH

Malone Advertising/JWT Action, Akron, OH

Musée du verre, Sars Poteries, FRANCE

National Museum of Contemporary Art, Seoul, KOREA

National Council on the Education of Ceramic Arts, Erie, CO

Newark Museum of Art, NJ

Northern Clay Center, Minneapolis, MN

Pizzuti Collection, Columbus, OH

Presidential Palace Grounds, Vilnius, Lithuania

San Bao Ceramic Art Institute, Jingdezhen, China

Schein-Joseph International Museum of Ceramic Art, Alfred
University, Alfred, NY

Shigaraki Ceramic Cultural Park Art Museum, Japan

South Bend Regional Art Museum, South Bend, IN

South Texas College, McAllen, TX

Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville, IL

Sun Valley Art Center, Sun Valley, ID

Practical Informations



KIRK MANGUS

NADA MIAMI

Booth 5.01

1952 - 2013

November 30 - December 3, 2022

NADA Miami
Nov 30 – Dec 3
2022
Ice Palace
Studios

20th Edition

NADA MIAMI

Ice Palace Studios

59 NW 14th Street

Miami, FL 33136

VIP Preview

Wednesday, November 30 : 10am - 4pm

Public hours

Wednesday, November 30 : 4pm - 7pm

Thursday, December 1 : 11am - 7pm

Friday, December 2 : 11am - 7pm

Saturday, December 3 : 11am - 6pm

Galerie Lefebvre & Fils

24, rue du Bac

75007 Paris

From Tuesday to Saturday
11am - 1pm and 2pm - 7pm
Monday by appointment

01 42 61 18 40
lefebvreetsfils@gmail.com
www.lefebvreetsfils.fr