



Subconscious Surfaced

Cover photo: Nancy Carman, *Have/Have Nots*, 1996-1998, earthenware, glazes, China paint, 16 x 16 x 84 in

SUBCONSCIOUS SURFACED

 MODERNE GALLERY

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A number of works in the exhibition derive from the esteemed collection of Marc and Diane Grainer, renowned patrons, collectors, and champions of the arts, who assembled a singular collection over the course of more than forty-five years. We are proud to present these works and to serve as stewards as they find their way into new collections.

On view are works featuring figures, narratives, and compositions drawn from deep within the subconscious, emerging from a realm beyond the threshold of immediate awareness.

Through incongruous forms and psychologically charged imagery, the artists give material presence to subconscious visions, bringing into view what ordinarily remains beyond immediate perception. Situated between the imagined and the tangible, these works offer insight into psychological dimensions that exceed the limits of ordinary experience.

GALLERY NOTE

What has always drawn us to these works is their ability to give form to something not easily described. They operate in a space between the seen and the sensed, where memory, intuition, humor, tension, and psychological charge begin to surface. Whether through figuration, distortion, modulation, or narrative, the artists featured in Subconscious Surfaced make visible something that remains just beyond language. That quality feels central to the spirit of this exhibition - the sense that the subconscious is not separate from everyday life but rather constantly pressing into it.

An especially meaningful aspect of this exhibition is how strongly it connects to Philadelphia. This city has historically played an important role in shaping serious conversations around craft, clay, and sculptural practice. The influence of its galleries and institutions is deeply felt in that history, specifically in this context the work of The Clay Studio, which has provided an essential platform for artists and helped sustain a community around ceramics for decades. Philadelphia is a place where artists, collectors, galleries, and institutions have come together in significant and lasting ways, and this exhibition is very much part of this larger story.

A number of the works featured in Subconscious Surfaced come from the collection of Marc and Diane Grainer, whose commitment to artists and to the broader community around this work deserves real recognition. Over the course of more than forty-five years, they built a collection with depth, character, and conviction. Just as important, they helped support an ecosystem of artists, galleries, institutions, and the continued visibility of this material. Their collecting methodology is engaged and sustaining, and its impact continues to be felt.

We are especially grateful to Leslie Ferrin for her help in working with the Grainers and in bringing this group of works forward. Her collaboration, generosity, and trust have meant a great deal throughout this process.

At Moderne Gallery, we think often about stewardship and continuity. Part of our role is to honor the histories these works carry while helping place them into new contexts and new collections. It is our hope that this exhibition speaks not only to the strength of the work itself, but also to a next generation of collectors who understand that collecting goes beyond the object.

It is a privilege to present these works in Philadelphia, where so much of this history continues to resonate, and to take part in the next chapter of that story.

–Moderne Gallery

THE GRAINERS: KEEPING IT SURREAL

Garth Johnson

Any object mixes itself so profoundly with the stuff of thought that it loses its actual form and recomposes itself a little differently in an ideal shape which haunts the brain.

-Virginia Woolf, Solid Objects

Pity the object in the 21st century--condemned by by minimalists, caught in the crosshairs of Swedish death cleaners, organized into extinction by Marie Kondo, and robbed of their mystery and primacy by material culture theorists intent on cross-referencing and cataloguing their every cultural connection and function. Objects are increasingly replaced by their digital equivalents--miniaturized and sucked into smart phones for virtual consumption.

Those who still believe in the primal power of an object to delight, surprise, or shock can still find a friendly cove in the writings and artwork of the Surrealists and their extended family. It is unsurprising that ceramics, whose roots extend from ancient fertility figures to countless vessel traditions, makes a strong showing. It can be argued that the most important objects of both the Dada and Surrealist movements are ceramic or have important ceramic components: Marcel Duchamp's Fountain and Object, Méret Oppenheim's fur-lined teacup. Both objects come freighted with their original function--in Duchamp's case as a porcelain urinal, and both use free-association to evoke a strong response in their viewers.

Surrealist manifesto writer André Breton, who dubbed Oppenheim's teacup Luncheon in Fur, wrote extensively about the power of objects. His apartment served as a cabinet of curiosities, filled with ethnographic objects from Africa and Oceania, natural wonders, and everyday objects that he felt were charged with

meaning or power. Rather than displaying his collections based on classification, he placed objects and artworks together to provide unexpected associations.

Over the course of 45 years, Marc and Diane Grainer collected functional and sculptural ceramics and juxtaposed them with studio furniture and textiles and household items that invariably bore the imprint of their maker. Although they are perhaps best known for their encyclopedic collection of British studio pottery, the Grainers consistently chose work by artists who draw from the Surrealist well like Sergei Isupov, Michael Lucero, Nancy Carman, and Sunkoo Yuh. Each of these artists mixes and matches strategies like chance operations, including automatism, dream logic, juxtaposing seemingly unrelated elements, and metamorphizing their subjects.

Core artists from the original Surrealist movement didn't tend to work in ceramics, which requires access to kilns and other specialized equipment and doesn't lend itself to Surrealism's immediacy. However, plenty of artists affiliated with Surrealism like Pablo Picasso, Joan Miró and Jean Cocteau produced bodies of work in ceramics after World War II. All three worked with potters who provided them with thrown forms to rearrange and redecorate. The artists reveled in responding to pottery forms by making their figurative drawings respond to their curves and swells of the pots--a strategy that correlates closely with Breton's writing. Miró's ceramic work tended to echo his abstract paintings, but Picasso and Cocteau aligned their ceramics with the Surrealists by using figures from mythology and classical literature as their subjects.

Although mythological subjects, particularly Europa and the Bull crop up frequently in the figurative ceramics of American artists like Viktor Schreckengost and Waylande Gregory, Ceramic sculptor Russell Barnett Aitken, who studied extensively in Vienna, explores Surrealist themes as early as 1935's *The Futility of a Well-Ordered Life*, which depicts a statuesque nude woman with blue hair and clocks for breasts holding up a fried egg. The woman's midsection is a rectangular void that contains a glazed vessel. In 1948, ex G.I. Sascha Brastoff won a major purchase prize at the Syracuse Museum of Fine Arts (now the

Everson Museum of Art) Ceramic National exhibition for a set of six canape trays that depict distinctly surreal human-animal hybrids that are given names like Sex Monster, Night Monster, and Fish Monster.

Surrealism reared its head again in American ceramics in the 1960s in the form of Funk Art. Robert Arneson made body horror the order of the day in works like his fleshy Trophy series, his Funk toilets, and Typewriter, a sculpture of a typewriter with red-fingernailed fingers standing in for the typewriter keys. The Grainers began collecting ceramics in the late 1970s, an era where a growing network of craft galleries showed bold work that expanded on Funk's disconcerting themes. As the 1980s dawned Postmodernism gave artists the power to put different art movements and tools in a blender, resulting in work that can be fizzy and funny, but often tinged with darkness, eros, or surprise. The Grainers continued to champion these artists and their descendants over more than four decades.

Like André Breton, Marc and Diane Grainer embraced the power of the object by turning their Maryland house into a cabinet of wonder. Their collection was carefully displayed, but with unexpected juxtapositions that put formal British studio pottery next to playful Postmodernists and bawdy boundary-pushers. Bathrooms and guest bedrooms became vehicles for the surprise and delight of their many guests. Each work from the Grainer collection comes pre-charged with the energy of its maker, but also of the collectors themselves, who loved each piece on its own terms, but taken together, the collection generated a force field of surprise, shock, and delight. Tap in.

–Garth Johnson, *Curator of Ceramics, Everson Museum of Art*



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RALPH BACERRA

b. 1938, Garden Grove, CA

d. 2008, Los Angeles, CA

A seminal figure in ceramics and ceramic education, Ralph Bacerra utilized a rigorous technical approach to redefine the decorative potential of the ceramic vessel. After completing his B.A. at the Chouinard Art Institute in 1961 under the mentorship of Vivika Heino, whom he eventually succeeded as department chair, Bacerra went on to lead the ceramics department at Otis College of Art and Design. His practice is characterized by a sophisticated synthesis of global aesthetics, drawing deeply from Persian, Japanese, and Chinese pottery and textile traditions. By meticulously layering glazes, lusters, and china paints, Bacerra transformed the ceramic surface into a vibrant field of visual energy, expertly navigating the tension between complex ornamentation and the underlying form.



Ralph Bacerra

Head Vessel, 1993

earthenware, glaze

20 x 8 x 35 in

Purchased at Donna Schneier Fine Art, 1999, from Garth Clark Gallery, from the collection of Peter Joseph

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



MARK BURNS

b. 1950, Springfield, OH
lives and works in Las Vegas, NV

Mark Burns is a master of the narrative ceramic, known for a practice that seamlessly blends trompe l'oeil precision with the provocative energy of "Punk Art." Educated at the University of Washington in the 1970s under luminaries like Patti Warashina and Robert Sperry, Burns leverages his background as an illustrator and restorer to create complex, hand-built figurative sculptures. His work frequently utilizes humor and pop culture to interrogate cultural norms surrounding identity and sexuality. Described as a "visual diary" of the artist's life, Burns's meticulously crafted sculptures employ mixed media, decals, and lusters to create immersive, often surrealist narratives that challenge the viewer's perception of both material and social constructs.



Mark Burns

Little Absalom Teapot, 1998

stoneware, earthenware, glaze, China paint

12 x 9 x 14 in

Purchased at Helen Drutt, Philadelphia, PA, 1998

Made in the artist's studio, Las Vegas, Nevada

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



NANCY CARMAN

b. 1950, Tucson, AZ

lives and works in San Francisco, CA

Nancy Carman explores the psychological depths of the human condition through hand-built, low-fired ceramic sculptures and tiles. An alumna of the San Francisco Art Institute and the University of Washington (MFA), Carman was recognized early in her career with a National Endowment for the Arts fellowship. Her oeuvre is defined by a haunting, Surrealist aesthetic, often featuring stark, gender-neutral figures that exist within enigmatic, narrative compositions. Moving between highly finished, graphic surfaces and unglazed, faceted forms, Carman's work possesses a quiet, unsettling power that invites deep contemplation.



Nancy Carman

Untitled, 1982

glazed earthenware

18 x 13.5 x 6.75 in

Private Collection





Nancy Carman

Mentor, 1992

ceramic, underglaze, glaze, China paint

19.25 x 7.5 x 16 in

Purchased at Helen Drutt, Philadelphia, PA, 1998

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Nancy Carman

Don't Look, 1999

white earthenware, underglaze, clear glaze

18.75 x 8.75 x 15 in

Purchased at Helen Drutt, Philadelphia, PA, 1999

Made in the artist's studio, Philadelphia, PA

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Nancy Carman

Have/Have Nots, 1996-1998

earthenware, glazes, China paint

16 x 16 x 84 in

Purchased at Helen Drutt, Philadelphia, PA, 1998

Made in the artist's studio, Philadelphia, PA

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



JACK EARL

b. 1934, Uniopolis, OH

d. 2023, St. Marys, OH

Jack Earl fundamentally recalibrated the European figurative tradition through the lens of rural American life. Initially inspired by the Rococo fantasy of Meissen porcelain at the Toledo Museum of Art, Earl eventually transposed the storytelling quality of 18th-century figurines into a contemporary, vernacular idiom. His work shifted from aristocratic imagery to the minutely detailed depiction of the "Everyman" within the culturally isolated towns of his native Ohio. By the 1970s, Earl's porcelain sculptures evolved into surreal, poignant chronicles of humdrum activities, elevating the prosaic lives of small-town residents to a status of universal, symbolic importance.



Jack Earl

I Knew A Guy, 2003
ceramic, China paint
11 x 12 x 30.5 in

Purchased at Perimeter Gallery Inc, Chicago, IL, 2004
The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



There was a guy who didn't have any legs. Oh he had legs, I mean, he had
no legs. He didn't know it. When he looked in the mirror and there he was walking
he thought he was pretty snappy and of course his best friend didn't
he ran with regular people but of course his best friend didn't
ever told him he didn't have any legs. He was a sensitive person
No legs went off, red faced cuss in mad. Never had any of the
"Who are you to judge me?" stuff. So he lived and the
had two hundred thousand dollars stored up in a bank
right there just down the road in that white
with the steps leadin' up to it, they sold
there for a dollar and a quarter a pair
Oh well.

Jax Equi 2003

SERGEI ISUPOV

b. 1963, Stavropol, Ukraine

lives and works between Cummington, MA, USA and Tallinn, Estonia

Sergei Isupov occupies a prominent position in international contemporary ceramics, known for his extraordinary ability to marry three-dimensional sculpture with narrative painting. Born into a family of artists and educated across Ukraine and Estonia during the Soviet era, Isupov immigrated to the United States in 1994. His porcelain works, characterized by hand-built forms and intricate stain-and-glaze paintings, explore the complexities of the human psyche and the body. In light of recent geopolitical conflicts in Ukraine and Estonia, his work has taken on a renewed urgency, serving as a visceral, creative response to the anxieties of war and the fragility of peace.



Sergei Isupov

To Go All Out, 2000
porcelain, glaze, stain
14 x 11.5 x 17.5 in

Purchased from SOFACH, 2000
The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sergei Isupov

Genetic Bar Code, 1997

porcelain, glaze, stain

11 x 4 x 7.5 in

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sergei Isupov

Walking Through Memory, 1996

porcelain, glaze, stain

11 x 4 x 10 in

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sergei Isupov

Swimmer Teapot, 1996

porcelain, glaze, stain

13 x 11 x 10 in

Purchased from Dorothy Weiss Gallery, 1997

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sergei Isupov

Indian Hotelier, 1996

porcelain, glaze, stain

10 x 5.5 x 6 in

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sergei Isupov

Private Time, 1999

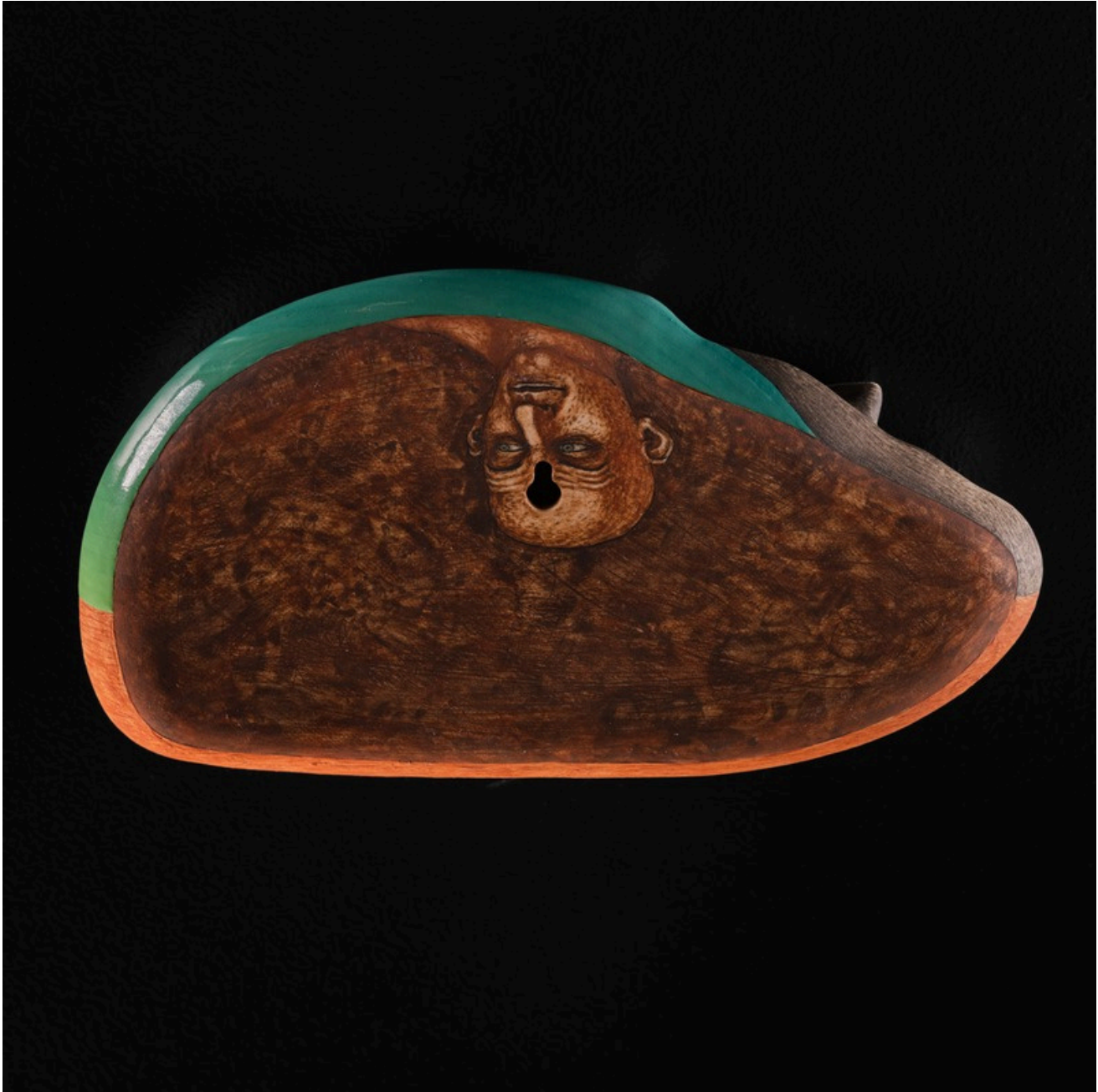
porcelain, glaze, stain

9 x 1.75 x 6.5 in

Exhibited The Clay Studio November, 2000

The Kalodner Collection

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sergei Isupov

Obsession, 2002
porcelain, glaze, stain
13.5 x 8 x 6 in

Purchased from Wexler Gallery, 2002
The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sergei Isupov

Limits, 1999

porcelain, glaze, stain

15 x 6 x 6 in

Purchased from SOFA NY, 1999

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



ISUPOV USSR - USA

Leslie Ferrin

Sergei Isupov arrived in the US at a fortuitous moment. One of many Eastern European artists who were suddenly free to travel and seek opportunity, he left Tallinn, Estonia and settled in Louisville, KY in 1993. His work immediately attracted the attention of collectors of contemporary ceramics and studio craft. Drawn by the energy and excitement of these early works and actively engaged in the discovery of Isupov's remarkable arrival in America, collectors continued to follow his career. Marc and Diane Grainer were among the first to purchase his work directly from the studio and sought out his work wherever it was shown. They acquired multiple sculptures and related works on paper produced during this formative period. Active with many collector groups, museum boards and travel, their patronage was contagious.

Isupov's story attracted early recognition, widely covered by the press that featured him in numerous publications. He developed strong and important support among collectors that allowed him and by extension the field of narrative ceramics to quickly grow. Moderne Gallery's *Subconscious Surfaced* presents a survey of works in the Grainer's and other private collections who, like Isupov, used the forms and surface of ceramic sculpture in the late 90's and early 00's to produce surrealistic autobiographical narratives.

When Sergei Isupov first came to America he was already a celebrated artist in the Baltics. Born in the USSR in 1963, he was raised by artist parents, his mother a sculptor, his father a painter. They worked for the state as artists. He knew only that model. In childhood he was trained in their studios until at age 11 when he was sent to boarding school to attend a highly competitive, rigorous program. Challenged by formal academic requirements, Isupov only progressed by entertaining his classmates and charming his professors with provocative

narratives and his highly developed artistic skills. Always a prolific artist with a work ethic that kept him in the studio, his artwork got him both in and out of trouble. His graduation show was open and closed in one day for its inappropriate content. However, the babushkas who guarded the entrance began taking bribes and by word of mouth, his growing reputation drew hundreds to see what the government had censored. Rejected from art school in St. Petersburg, in 1984 Isupov chose the Estonian University of Art in Tallinn, a school with a strong ceramic program and government supported studios. Isupov continued to work there after graduation which is where he was working when Estonian independence was recognized and the USSR collapsed in Fall 1991.

Unlike the US where artists worked independently in private studios with access to materials and equipment, in socialist Europe, artists had to scramble for access to both. Isupov's early works were created where there was access and means to produce. Working in manufactories, during lengthy symposia and at creative residencies, his work and its somber palette reflected the environment. He met other artists in these communal settings that fostered intergenerational connections and attracted international attention as the world opened up.

THE PHILADELPHIA STORY

During Perestroika, in 1991, Jimmy Clark, an artist and director of The Clay Studio in Philadelphia, received funding from the The Pew Charitable Trust to visit 45 studios in 30 days throughout Eastern Europe. He met Isupov and began to gather works for an upcoming exhibition timed to coincide with the 1992 NCECA conference in Philadelphia. Clark's exhibition *CONTEMPORARY East European Ceramics* at the Clay Studio featured 74 artists from the former East Block Countries February 15-March 22, 1992 in cooperation with The Philadelphia Ceramic Consortium.

Isupov's training in the Soviet system was preparation for the production of propaganda style ceramics and public art in factories. With the collapse of the USSR, freedom of expression released artists to create their own design and

sculpture gathering for symposia throughout Eastern Europe. International artists primarily from Western Europe and America found opportunities to join them in the Baltics. At a two month symposium in Latvia, Sergei met an American artist, Dana Major. They began a relationship that brought him to Louisville, Kentucky, where she lived. They married in 1993 and together set up a studio called 9 Pines Art where they taught classes, co-designed and produced imaginative small works to support themselves and participated in the exploding market for American Craft at fairs and galleries. By 1996, they divorced, but by then Sergei had established a strong following for his own work. Collectors and galleries sought him out and wherever he showed, the work quickly sold out. These included the Smithsonian Craft Fair in Washington and solo shows at galleries that represented him; Martha Connell in Atlanta GA and Dorothy Weiss in San Francisco, CA. Isupov was not alone in his use of figural narratives and he fit into a group of artists active in the 90's, immediately attracting attention of collectors on both coasts.

In the studio, Sergei jumped at the opportunity to use color, something that was newly available to him from suppliers in the US. Sergei found artistic freedom support from the numerous collectors who competed with one another to acquire his work and provided support for his careers as patrons. His commercial success also inspired a generation of artists who, like him, were using these materials to paint on increasingly decorative, non functional vessels and sculptures. His work fit into well established collections by master artists of the 70's and 80's. On the West Coast the generation of students of Robert Arneson, Howard Kotler and Viola Frey were exhibiting figural sculpture. In the 90's the teapot form provided a unified theme for collectors and artists who used the form to blend two and three dimensional expression. Collectors welcomed figural sculpture and narrative painting with enthusiasm connecting with ideas of surrealism, autobiography and visual metaphor.

Isupov became known as an "Erotic Surrealist", capturing the attention of collectors with his skills and subject matter. His exquisitely detailed images, delicate figural elements - hands, fingers, clawed feet, and animalistic features were linked to fully painted surfaces illustrated with subconscious imagery and

personal emotions. He poured out expressions of grief, jealousy and sexual curiosity revealing intimate details, traversing inner debates between good and evil and floating symbols populating existential worlds. Capturing the imagery burned into his mind from the medieval paintings and religious icons from his classical education, he incorporated visual references in details that hovered over deserted landscapes, mid-flight, landing on a barren plain not unlike the way he suddenly landed in late 20th century America. Working alone and living a hermetic sparse lifestyle, the work poured out of him, embracing every opportunity to exhibit with a new body of work. Each series recombined elements and with his photographic memory, he produced two and four legged human animals, twisted in frozen acrobatic twists in a two and three dimensional improvisational dance. Not only free to express himself openly he was also free to accept invitations and travel America. At universities, craft programs and conferences, he demonstrated, taught and inspired students. At residencies he was voracious to use the opportunity working 24/7, motivating others by his work ethic and all the time meeting artists and collectors every place he landed.

In 2006 Isupov was restless and ready to leave Richmond, VA. Through Ferrin Gallery we were actively working together, becoming his sole representative as his other galleries closed. I invited him to rural Cumington, Massachusetts to tour a 19th Century Mill building, a raw shell with great potential. The opportunity to create a live work environment with a well equipped studio and onsite gallery program created a partnership that continues to this day as Project Art. Twenty years later, he lives with his wife, artist Kadri Parnamets and daughter Roosi balancing their lives in the US and Estonia.

The exhibition at Moderne Gallery includes works by Sergei Isupov from 1995 - 2002 from his studios in Louisville, Kentucky and Richmond, Virginia acquired by the Grainers from visits to his studio, exhibitions at numerous galleries and the fairs he participated in.

–Leslie Ferrin, *Founder & Director, Ferrin Contemporary and Project Art*

MICHAEL LUCERO

b. 1953, Tracy, CA

lives and works in Signal Mountain, TN

Michael Lucero emerged in the New York art scene during the dominance of Minimalism, yet he pursued a distinct path characterized by a playful, eclectic approach to sculpture. Holding an MFA from the University of Washington, Lucero transitioned from polychrome clay to a hybrid practice that incorporates cast metal. His work is a celebratory amalgam of influences, which the artist describes as a "reverence for high art, affection for folk art, nostalgia for nature, and curiosity about other cultures." His work is represented in many of the world's most prestigious institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.



Michael Lucero

Face Jug, 1990
ceramic, glaze

8 x 10 x 11 in

Purchased from Donna Schneier Fine Art, NY, 2000
The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



LOUIS MARAK

b. 1942, Shawnee, OK

lives and works in Eureka, CA

Louis Marak is a distinguished figure in American craft, recognized for his long-standing commitment to both his studio practice and art education. An Alfred University graduate (MFA '67), Marak served as a Professor at Humboldt State University for nearly four decades. His work, which has been featured in major institutions from the Renwick Gallery to the Hong Kong Museum of Art, is celebrated for its technical mastery and formal innovation. A Fellow of the American Craft Council and a former visiting artist at the American Academy in Rome, Marak's contributions to the ceramic medium are enshrined in permanent collections at LACMA and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.



Louis Marak

Floating Frames Teapot, 1997

low fired glazed ceramic

16 x 6 x 13 in

Purchased from Ferrin Gallery, SOFACH, 2000

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Louis Marak

Teapot, 1994

ceramic

15 x 5 x 14 in

Purchased from John Natsoulas Gallery, David, CA, 2010

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



BEVERLY MAYERI

b. 1944, New Jersey

lives and works in Mill Valley, CA

Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Beverly Mayeri creates introspective figurative sculptures that explore the psychological nuances of the human experience. Informed by an early exposure to painting and a character-driven humor inherited from her parents, Mayeri's clay works possess a profound emotive resonance. A recipient of two NEA Visual Artist Individual Fellowships and a Virginia A. Groot Foundation Grant, her work is held in numerous public collections, including the High Museum of Art and the Honolulu Museum of Art. Through her nuanced rendering of the human form, Mayeri invites viewers into a quiet dialogue with the self.



Beverly Mayeri

Buttoned Up, 2003
low fired clay, acrylic
13 x 8 x 18 in

Purchased from Franklin Parrasch Gallery, 2004
The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



NORMA MINKOWITZ

b. 1937, New York, NY

lives and works in Westport, CT

Norma Minkowitz has pioneered a unique sculptural language by transforming the delicate act of crochet into a rigid, structural medium. Her mesh-like, interlaced forms explore themes of containment, the skeletal system, and the cycles of life and death. By incorporating organic elements like twigs within these hard, fiber-based structures, Minkowitz creates a visual metaphor for the internal systems of the human body and the passage of time. A Fellow of the American Craft Council, her work is featured in the permanent collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cooper Hewitt, and the Museum of Arts and Design.



Norma Minkowitz

Come Closer, 1998

fiber

22 x 18 x 36 in

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection



MICHELE OKA DONER

b. 1945, Miami Beach, FL

lives and works in New York, NY

While Michele Oka Doner is primarily renowned for her monumental bronze public installations, her career began with a radical and celebrated investigation into ceramics. Immediately following her graduation from the University of Michigan in 1967, her work, particularly her "tattooed dolls", garnered critical attention for its raw, barbaric surrealism. These early pieces, often featuring organic configurations reminiscent of seashells and truncated figurative forms, established the biological and primordial themes that have continued to define her expansive practice across multiple media.



Michele Oka Doner

Tattooed Doll, c. 1960s

porcelain with iron oxide, stoneware

8 x 11 x 13 in

Private Collection



SUNKOO YUH

b. 1960, South Korea

lives and works in Athens, GA

Sunkoo Yuh is a leading voice in contemporary ceramic sculpture, currently serving as a Professor at the University of Georgia. Educated at Hong Ik University and Alfred University, Yuh creates dense, monumental compositions that weave together personal history, cultural memory, and social observation. His illustrious career includes receiving the Grand Prize at the 2nd World Ceramic Biennale and a Joan Mitchell Foundation grant. Yuh's intricate, often visceral sculptures are held in global collections, including the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg and the Smithsonian's Renwick Gallery, marking him as a pivotal figure in the global dialogue of contemporary craft.



Sunkoo Yuh

Con Man's World, 1993

stoneware, glaze

23 x 18 x 32 in

Purchased from Helen Drutt, Philadelphia, PA, 1999

Made in the artist's studio, Long Beach, California

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection





Sunkoo Yuh

Alfred Fertility Chicken, 1997

stoneware, glaze

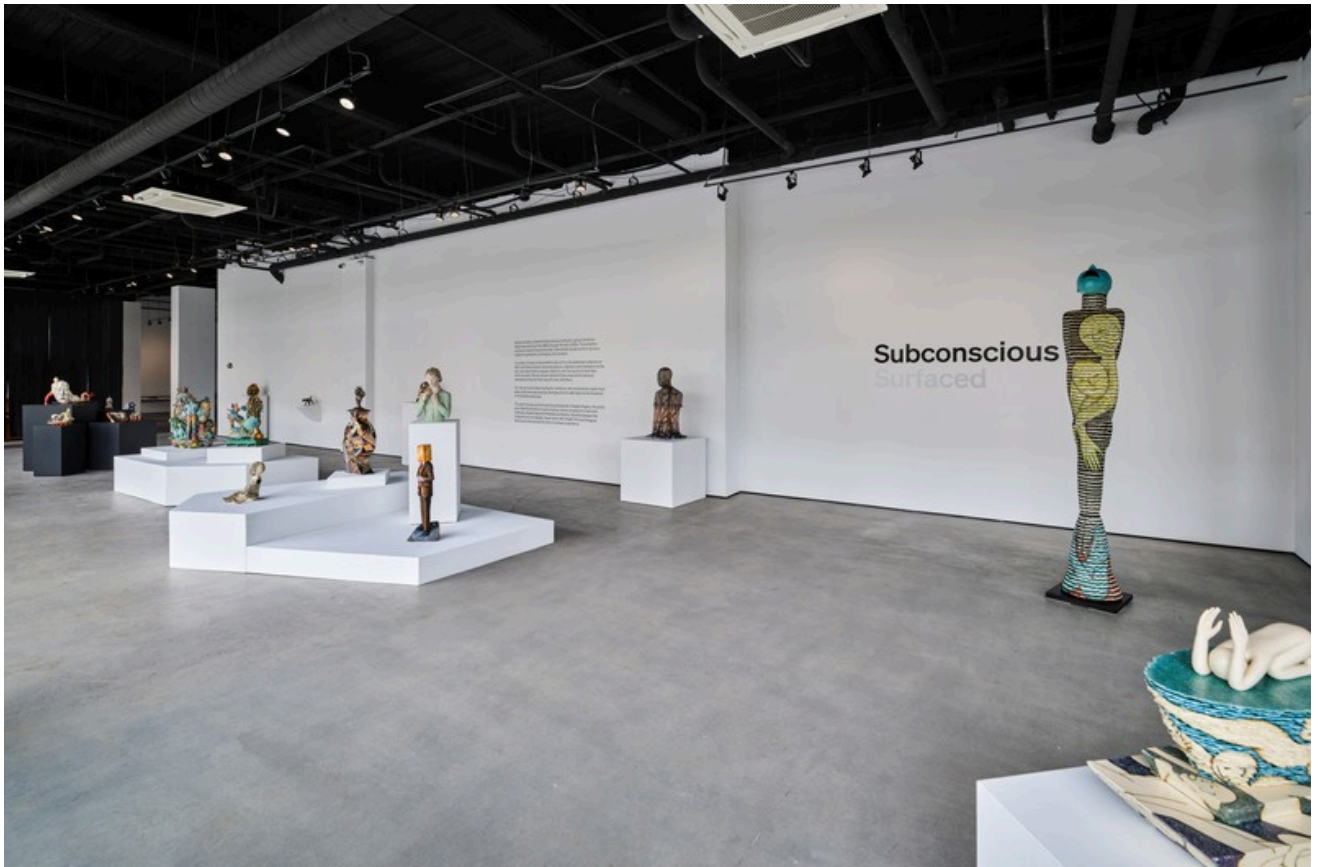
19 x 11 x 26 in

Purchased from Helen Drutt, Philadelphia, PA, 1997

Made in the artist's studio, Alfred, NY

The Marc & Diane Grainer Collection













ABOUT MODERNE GALLERY

Founded in 1984, Moderne Gallery is internationally renowned as a leading dealer of exceptional art and design from the 20th and 21st Centuries. With a specialized knowledge of works from the Studio Craft Movement, Moderne Gallery has established a reputation as an authority on works by designers such as George Nakashima and Wharton Esherick. In 1985 Moderne Gallery was pioneering in its exhibition of the work of George Nakashima and continues to maintain the finest and largest selection in the US of the designer's 1940's-1980's designs. The gallery has also extended its inventory to include works by Sam Maloof, Wendell Castle, Arthur Espenet Carpenter, David Ebner, Peter Voulkos, Toshiko Takaezu, Viola Frey, Edward Moulthrop, William Hunter, and many others as well as an extensive range of historical and contemporary ceramics from the US, Europe, and Japan.

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Isabel Twanmo, Communications Coordinator, Ferrin Contemporary

Garth Johnson, Curator of Ceramics, Everson Museum of Art

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