

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 2011

## BRYAN HUNT CLAY



*Rhyton I*, 2010, ceramic. 6 ¼ x 5 ¼ x 4 1/2 in.; *Triplos*, 2010, ceramic, 5 ¾ x 5 x 3 ¼ in



*Black Rhyton*, 2011, ceramic, 12 ½ x 7 x 5 ½ in

From June 30 through July 25, 2011 The Drawing Room in East Hampton is pleased to present two one person exhibitions: *Bryan Hunt: Clay* and *Dorothea Rockburne*, a selection of works inspired by astronomy and mathematics. Concurrently, Bryan Hunt's earlier bronze sculpture and related drawings are on view at Guild Hall and Dorothea Rockburne is the subject of a retrospective at the Parrish Art Museum.

Bryan Hunt's new work in dark clay comprises a spirited collection of small scale, richly textured and glazed vessels. Embracing the spontaneity that hand-building affords, Hunt has invented an eccentric group of sculptural forms, many of which echo the fluid, cascading movement of his large cast bronze waterfalls now at Guild Hall. Leaning and twisting and falling in space, the earlier monumental bronzes manifest gravity as a sheer force of nature. *Small Twist II*, a majestic bronze also from the late 1970s, will be on view in The Drawing Room garden. By contrast and with a grace of their own, the new smaller ceramic forms are quirky and humble vessels full of personality and humor. This rare opportunity to see the range of Hunt's expressive forms in three vastly different media in two East Hampton venues is not to be missed.

Marked by the immediacy inherent in Hunt's direct process, some of these delicate, anthropomorphic ceramic forms evoke mythological chalices and ancient Chinese bronzes. Among the wide range of familiar silhouettes in this body of work 4 to 11 inches tall are teapots, bowls, Greek libation vessels and art nouveau steel work. Even Paul Gauguin's earthly organic clay forms and George Orr's glazes come to mind. With free association and direct hand building in dark clay Hunt finds a new occasion to explore his love of drawing through a broad array of incising and glazing techniques that enliven and animate the surfaces of these wondrous works in clay.

Always imagining the negative as well as the positive shapes in nature, Hunt turns to a series of whimsical forms from the history of objects and imbues them with a natural history of their own. A series of imaginary teapots named after the seven moons of Saturn earn a more metaphorical use. Each spherical orb sprouts a spout and handle from slender clay walls mottled by lunar craters where the glazes pool and glisten. Balanced precariously on three feet, these satellites seem to be wobbling through this time and space from a distant universe.

Exploring other iconic vessel forms, Hunt revisits the pitcher motif in *White Calyx* (2011). This tilting pitcher on three feet, distorted to look more like a vegetable or flower stalk, wanders like an underwater plant growing toward the light. A milk white glaze incised with abstract graffiti envelopes the exterior walls while the tantalizing lip of the opening reveals a glassy green interior. In a paper-thin family of three forms, the white glaze is dotted with protruding nodes that expose a pattern on the dark clay reminiscent of indigenous West African mud architecture.

(over)

Several dark vessels in this show appear truly ancient. *Black Calyx* (2011), seems to share the patina of the black clay bodies rubbed and polished with stone in Olmec culture. The charred, dry molten textures on these forms that Hunt waxes to a fine finish conjure up incense burners and long lost rites. In this surprising and delicate body of work, Bryan Hunt enjoys working directly with a responsive medium on an intimate scale. It is a rare view into another creative facet of a distinguished sculptor.

Hunt, who divides his time between studios in New York and Wainscott, first settled in New York after completing his BFA at the Otis Art Institute of Los Angeles in the early 1970s. This fall, several of his major sculptures will be installed along New York's Park Avenue Sculpture Mall. His work is included in many museum collections, among them the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Museum of Modern Art, Whitney Museum of American Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, Los Angeles County Museum of Art and Stedelijk Museum.

**Hours: Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Monday 11–6, Sunday 11-5.**

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