## SEANKELLY

Richard Janku, Laura. "Nathan Mabry's Jackin', Stackin', Crackin' Sculpture," ArtInfo, June 12, 2007.

## **BLOUIN** ARTINFO

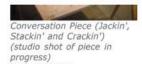
## Nathan Mabry's Jackin', Stackin', Crackin' Sculpture

2/12 S. La Cienega Bivd Los Angeles California

310 559 0100 fax 0120

cherryandmartin.com

Sculpture," artinfo.com, October 27, 2005.



"I use compassionateirreverence and conceptualism to combine different cultural effigiesinto my own metaphors," says young artist Nathan Mabry, standing in hisstudio next to his brand new sculpture, Conversation Piece (Jackin', Stackin', and Crackin'), which will go on view at Los Angeles's cherrydelosreyes Gallery on Nov. 4.

Likea latter-day Brancusi, 27-year-old Mabry melds ritual objects with archformalism. To be precise, he uses clay to fashion outsized versions ofpre-Columbian ceremonial vessels, then places these atop elements basedon artworks by Minimalist masters such as Sol LeWitt and Tony Smith.From this description, his sculptures may sound like dissonant clashesof cultures, but they wind up being surprisingly elegant and superblyresolved.

These days Mabry, who lives and works in L.A., and whose work was included in the widely praised exhibition Thing: New Sculpture from Los Angelesat the Hammer Museum earlier this year, is adding an L.A.-specifictwist to his work, riffing on the sculptures of L.A. finish fetishistJohn McCracken, while also further exploring his own interest intoday's youth culture.

Conversation Piece consists of large terra cotta vessel in the shape of a llama's head that rests onglossy candy colored cubes inspired by McCracken's sculptures. Mabry isplaying with classic binary oppositions—handmade versus industrially fabricated; representational versus abstract; ancient versus contemporary—but he updates them with a splash of the latest streetstyles.



For instance, the llama's teeth are made from whitegold embedded with crystals that spell out the word P-E-A-C-E, a nod tothe custom-made, gold teeth sported by hip hoppers. Not that bling isanything new, Mabry seems to be reminding us—the Incas were into goldteeth, too. And the artist is quick to note that the figure of thellama also draws on camel and rams' head vessels from Mesopotamia, relating it to the current Middle East conflict.

Mabry'sdecision to recreate pre-Columbian pottery—Mochi pottery to be exact—isnot insignificant. He is recalling a once-great civilization, andjuxtaposing it with our present-day surroundings. Like a skilled DJ, hespins quite a few tracks, and creates a new whole. Historical,anthropological, and yet funky and fresh, Mabry's sculptures are bothmodest monuments and cautionary tales.

Nathan Mabry's sculpture Conversation Piece (Jackin', Stackin', and Crackin') is currently on view at cherrydelosreyes in a two person exhibition with Jeremy Shaw, from Nov. 4 to Dec. 11.

All images courtesy of Cherrydelosreys, Los Angeles, CA