

GALLERI URBANE

Sam Mack: *buff*

November 19, 2022 - January 4, 2023

Public Reception: November 19, 6-8 PM

Galleri Urbane welcomes back sculptor and ceramicist Sam Mack for their second solo show with the gallery, *buff*. This follows their inclusion in the gallery's 2020 summer collective and their 2019 solo exhibition, *Pass*.

Entitled *buff*, the show references the word's numerous definitions, including the name of clay forms with a tan, sandy color (stoneware), a person's muscular build, and the physical practice of maintaining a car's body.

"*buff* describes an investment based on reductive definitions that name an arbitrary point in process which is intended to yield one final expected outcome rather than the full spectrum of what is possible from that material and the myriad of practices," Mack writes in a statement for the show, referencing the levels a ceramic piece must go through to pass as buff.

Traditionally non-functional beyond their original use, the artist grants permanence to familiar vessels such as Big Gulps and coffee cups by making them into stoneware. The sculpted containers are adorned with objects of everyday life, including queer and specifically transgender iconography. While not figurative, nor literally representative of any one individual, these still life objects of transness allow the viewer's body to become the body in relationship to these objects.

The viewer's proximity and relationship to the work is important as they bring experiences of all forms, abilities, and identities, "which are valid and valued beyond state-constructed expectations," Mack stated. The artist solidifies existence in this collection of stoneware artifacts of transgender life and references a grammar and history of trans gay men and masculinities broadly under-considered to this day.

Sam Mack is an artist working with clay as an allegorical device and art material. They received their MFA from the School of Art at the University of Arkansas in 2019. Their work has been exhibited at YNG SPC, Untitled Art Fair in Miami, FL, the JEAE International Arts Center in Jingdezhen, China, and the Aichi Ceramics Museum in Seto City, Japan. They have been an artist in residence at Ox Bow School of Art and Artist Residency and at SUNY in New Paltz. They are presently represented by Galleri Urbane (Dallas) and work as an Adjunct Professor of Ceramics at the University of Northern Iowa.