

David Zwirner

New York London Paris Hong Kong

Vessels

2 March–2 April 2022
24 Grafton Street, London



Huguette Caland, *Espace Blanc II*, 1984 © Huguette Caland Estate.
Courtesy Caland Family

David Zwirner is pleased to present *Vessels*, a group exhibition at the gallery's London location featuring works by artists from both generationally and geographically diverse backgrounds. Working in a range of media, these artists engage in different ways with the idea that the living body is a vessel—one that contains a life force or a spirit, but one that is also subjected to social, political, and cultural constructs.

Vessels is curated by gallery Director Galuh Sukardi, and will include works by Ruth Asawa, Huguette Caland, Seyni Awa Camara, Marlene Dumas, Geumhyung Jeong, Shio Kusaka, Maria Lassnig, Tiona Nekkia McClodden, Mrinalini Mukherjee, Alice Neel, Magdalene Odundo, Berenice Olmedo, Pamela Rosenkranz, Andra Ursuța, and Portia Zvavahera.

The exhibition is organized around three central themes. A number of the works on view can be considered *Earthen Vessels*, which embody a dialogue between the inside and outside. Through their use of organic materials, artists such as Shio Kusaka, Magdalene Odundo, Mrinalini Mukherjee, and Seyni Awa Camara explore in their forms the dichotomy between function and shape as well as solid and empty, with the architectonic structure of the vessel often evoking a spiritual resonance.

Cyborg Vessels—as represented by the work of Tiona Nekkia McClodden, Geumhyung Jeong, and Berenice Olmedo—hint at the presence of a human form. These artists subvert that very presence through the use of a technical, mechanical, or robotic gesture, which often reads as a defect or 'glitch.' What then appears are remnants of different realities and temporalities. In her 2020 book *Glitch Feminism*, curator Legacy Russell refers to the glitch as a structural failure, one that represses viewpoints outside of the dominant culture, but through which a new space can be opened up, and thus a site of potential that allows us to reinvent our humanity apart from traditional notions of race, gender, and sexuality.

Psychological Vessels bring into question the presence of consciousness, an experience explored in the work of Maria Lassnig, Portia Zvavahera, Huguette Caland, and Alice Neel. These painters in different ways explore the limits of the body as a life-containing vessel, the physical presence of the body in a dreamscape, or the mental perception of feelings or even expressions.

Drawing on a wide range of ideas, from spirituality to folklore, from sexuality to psychology, the works presented explore the limits of the human experience in their depictions of bodies as lived vessels as well as the issues at stake when the body is signified as a vessel. Across all of these categories, there are slippages where the works become sites in which the human experience has taken place but also onto which social and cultural ideas are projected.

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