

PRESS RELEASE

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Nick Lees and Greg Payce 'Liminal and Lenticular'

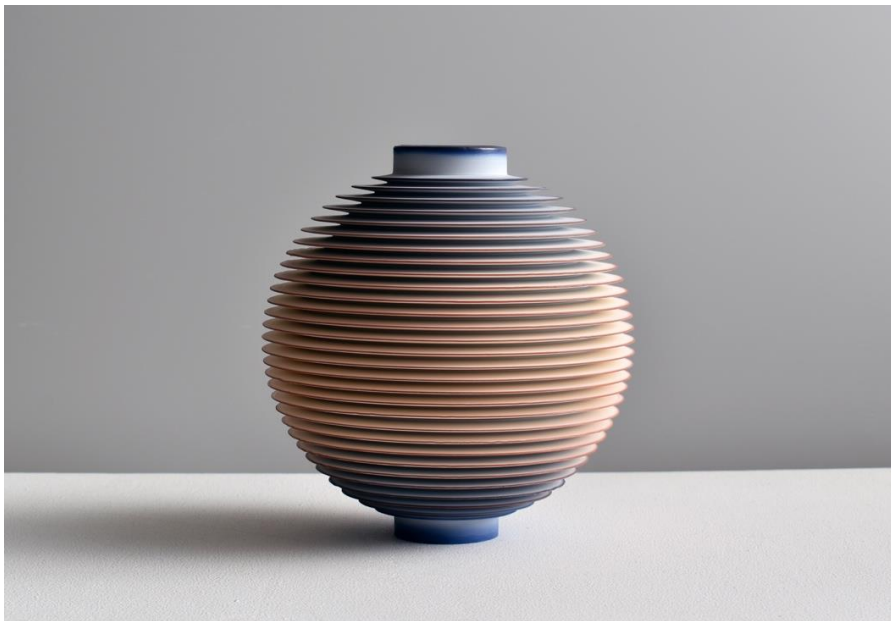
16 December 2023 – 15 January 2024

Messums West, Long Gallery



Continuing Messums' interest in ceramics to connect the viewer and artist through the processes of making, the gallery is proud to announce a new exhibition that demonstrates a deep connection with and knowledge of the material of clay.

'Liminal and Lenticular' brings together the work of two talented ceramicists, Nicholas Lees and Greg Payce, to explore their shared preoccupations with edge and volume, material and light, both within and without their vessels.



Lees and Payce create forms from clay that interact with and are made alive by their surroundings. Whether through the revelation of a figurative image in the negative space between vessels, as in Payce's work, or in the illusory play of light and shadow across the indefinable vessel boundaries, as with Lees, the works provoke a challenge to the viewer, firstly to see and secondly to embrace the constantly shifting image before them. The artists create meaning through uncertainty, of the boundaries and thresholds the viewer perceives, and the revelations there-in.



Both masters of their artform and their material, Lees and Payce have refined their own unique technical approach that results in artworks of incredible elegance and precision, unbelievably from the human hand. Lees brings his leather-hard thrown vessels to the lathe, carving pin-perfect fins into the clay walls. Colour is achieved, not through the glazed surface but, via absorption of

a mineral cocktail through the vessel walls. Both careful techniques that appeal to and upend our perceptions of ceramic and the container. Payce's expertly thrown pots, of impeccable symmetry and balance, work in unison or often choral harmony to reveal images of the figure or portrait within the constructed space between them.

Alongside their ceramics, both artists display their complementary practice. Drawings by Lees demonstrates his preoccupation with redefining and distorting boundaries through the blurring and bleeding of the inked line, much like Lees' application of colour to clay through liquid dissipation. Payce's video work further explores sensations of scale and optics in viewing his ceramics, whilst referencing the deep history of the ceramic continuum that informs his practice.



ABOUT NICHOLAS LEES

Nicholas Lees' work has been exhibited widely in the UK and overseas and is held in private and public collections including York City Art Gallery, Westerwald Keramikmuseum in Germany and Royal Caribbean International. He has won several awards including the Cersaie Prize at the Premio Faenza (Italy) in 2015, the National Sculpture Award at the Bluecoat Display Centre in Liverpool in 2010 and the Desmond Preston Prize for Excellence in Drawing at the RCA in 2012. Lees is a visiting lecturer on postgraduate courses at the RCA, UCA Farnham and Bath Spa University. He works from a studio in Selborne, Hampshire.

ABOUT GREG PAYCE

Greg Payce lives and works in Calgary, Alberta and was Professor of Ceramics at the Alberta College of Art and Design (ACAD) before stepping back to concentrate purely on his work. Raised in Edmonton, Payce's interest in ceramics began in his early years when he knew from the age of six that he wanted to be a potter.

Images from top to bottom, left to right:

Greg Payce, *Hyperion*, 2019, Porcelain, H 45.75 x W 29.2 cm, Photo: Steve Russell

Nick Lees, *Red/Blue Orbit*, 2023, Parian porcelain, soluble cobalt and soluble gold, H 19.5 x D 18.5 cm, Photo: Artist

Nick Lees, *Triptych*, 2020, Parian porcelain, H 52 x W 35 x D11 cm, Photo: Artist

Greg Payce, *Luna*, 2019, Porcelain, H 45.75 x W 29.2 cm Photo: Jo Sullivan

Nick Lees, *Untitled Drawing*, 2017, Ink on Paper, H 56 x W 76 cm, Photo: Artist

Greg Payce, still from *Transfiguration Redux* video, 2019

PRESS

For further information and press images, please contact: press@messums.org

MESSUMS WEST is a leading multi-purpose gallery and arts centre set inside a restored thirteenth-century tithe barn and surrounding buildings with exhibition space, sculpture garden and restaurant.

MESSUMS LONDON is a 2,000 sq ft exhibition space on Cork Street behind the Royal Academy. It hosts a rolling programme of exhibitions for our contemporary artists.