

ART NEW ENGLAND

CONTEMPORARY ART AND CULTURE

MUSEUM ISSUE • THE ROSE • CLARA LIEU • NORTHAMPTON • CMCA • JOHN GRILLO • PISSARRE



SEPTEMBER/
OCTOBER 2011

\$5.95 US
\$7.00 Canada



7 25274 74906 5

TIM ROWAN

Lacoste Gallery • Concord, MA • www.lacostegallery.com • September 17–October 9, 2011

Tim Rowan's sculptures are vessels only in an abstract sense. They are upright forms with voids in the center. There may be a bottom to their cavernous depths, and if stood outside in the rain, they likely would collect water. But it's more the idea of containment, of the center being a void that seems to drive these rough-hewn discoveries.

Michelangelo believed that in every block of stone a sculptural form was waiting to be discovered. Rowan's ceramics, made from thick slabs of natural clay, are more like expressions of the natural world given cylindrical form. Rusty brown, craggy gray, embedded with stones, dry and cracked but somehow solid and timelessly stable, his shapes are like the walls of ancient caves if they were exposed to light and air.

For all their rough edges, these sculptures are far from crude. Their hulls are layered, folded like origami, patterned at times like feathers or scales. Each seems to be a sort of stone vortex, a screw emerging from the earth. It matters if there are three grooves, or five, or

seven. Roughly geometric, these ridges create the fabric of the work, looking both human-



Tim Rowan, *Object 113*, 2011, native clay, wood-fired, 28 x 14 x 14".

made and all natural, like cell walls or seed pods that grow in profusion.

Most atypical are two works that are structurally the least complex. One looks more like the bark of a fossilized tree; four lobes rub against each other around their central vacancy (which takes the shape of a loose cloverleaf), and the movement between them seems slow and sensual, on the scale of plant growth.

Another form comprises two hemispheres sliding into each other at different angles. One thinks of lips, an abstraction, perhaps, of a mouth. Or perhaps it's two mouths, locked in a kiss.

In another piece, the ridges overlap each other like the dilating sections of a camera aperture. Movement is implied, even in so solid and seemingly heavy a form. There's a sense it might close completely or perhaps expand in a display of force. In another work the teeth, seven evenly spaced, twist around the cylinder at an angle. It's like a gear made by Mother Earth, for some purpose both eternal and unfathomable. —Shawn Hill

LINDA BOND: A COUNT

Available Potential Enterprises, Ltd (A.P.E.) • Northampton, MA • www.apearts.org • September 6–30, 2011

LINDA BOND: COLLATERAL DAMAGE

Trustman Gallery at Simmons College • Boston, MA • www.simmons.edu/trustman • October 11–November 10, 2011

On the tenth anniversary of 9/11, Linda Bond's two new shows, *a count* and *Collateral Damage*, are potent reminders of the suffering, loss, and cost of America's war on terror. Her skilled drawings of soldiers, insurgents, victims, and flags—inspired by photographs she found in the newspaper—and stirring installations, present the complex issues of 9/11 and the ensuing wars with equanimity. Her work is strikingly balanced between unflinching and contemplative.

In *a count*, white and beige gauze bandages from the Vietnam and World War II eras hang from the ceiling and pile on the floor like unfurled rolls of film. The streamers are 6 yards long, 1 to 2 inches wide, with 300 finger marks, each representing a fatality—both civilian and military—from the Iraq and Afghanistan wars. Bond, a practicing Buddhist, began to feel numb to the mounting number of dead; *a count* is her meditation. She dips her index finger in a mix-

ture of gunpowder and water and imprints the gauze, commemorating each individual loss. After a year, she has completed 500 of these memorial scrolls.

In *Inventory: Lost Weapons in Iraq*, an equally resonant installation, Bond wrestles with the incongruity of the 190,000 missing Glock pistols and AK-47 rifles the United States military were to give to Iraqi security forces early in the war. In this participatory work, she investigates the difficulty of keeping track of a large arsenal by distributing 110,000 postcard-size prints of the pistol and 80,000 of the rifle. The original drawings, made with gunpowder and



Linda Bond, *Inventory*, 2011–ongoing, Inventory cards: 110,000 AK-47 assault rifles and 80,000 Glock 19 pistols.

graphite, and a few prints hang on the wall of the A.P.E. gallery; the rest are stacked on the floor. Visitors are encouraged to take the postcards, fill in the "inventory record" on the back, and collectively, through her website, try to

keep track of each of these "weapons." Over the past decade, Bond's focus has been the fallout from 9/11. Her work helps us humanize and visualize the true cost of our wars amidst the confusing information in the media. Because her material is so arresting, instead of dodging our eyes, like we often do with the news, we're drawn in to inspect and contemplate. —Sarah Baker