

CYNTHIA LAHTI - *Trouble***January 10– February 14, 2026**

James Fuentes is pleased to announce Cynthia Lahti, *Trouble*. Marking the artist's first solo exhibition in Los Angeles, *Trouble* presents ceramic works primarily created over the past two years, since her celebrated debut New York presentation at the end of 2023. Even as Lahti's audience has broadened internationally, the core of her practice remains inward-facing and materially driven, directed by what she describes as a "ruthless search and response" to her human experience.

Lahti's ceramics—ranging from full body to torso or limb, sometimes fragmented—each contain an energy distinctly their own. Brought together, their independent attitudes and gestures also hint at the hidden shared universe from which they emerge. While strongly informed by her attention to the unfolding present, Lahti's works are just as deeply influenced by human artifacts from all ages. A congregation of found images forms the backdrop to her cast of figures. Magazine spreads, catalogs of art history, museum visits, and a range of pop-cultural materials convene in the studio alongside the artist's internal assemblage of observations. Wordlessly, the works we encounter speak to the most powerful truth to be found in even the smallest of relics.

As Lahti's internal observations wind their path toward three-dimensional structure, the artist experiments in forming, shaping, and glazing her materials. Then, literally solidifying into its own separate existence, each ceramic figure is ultimately and unpredictably defined through the final firing process. Accumulating joys and fears, in that bright, concealed moment inside the kiln, the work dramatically settles into its furthest expressive threshold. At times vivid, muted, or uneven colors accompany bubbles, seams, and other structural irregularities as integral components rather than technical aberrations.

While Lahti eschews art making as an illustrative process, her ceramic figures concentrate and reflect the psychic, emotional, and phenomenal environments that surround them. The distinct natural surroundings of the Pacific Northwest, where the artist was raised and still lives and works today, remain a profound influence, layering past and present. At times unfathomably wild and onumental, while carrying forth a continual cycle of growth, death, and rebirth, this environment anchors the potency of Lahti's work in connection with the indomitable beauty and chaos of the world at large, and of which it becomes a part. Meeting with the work's various other origins and inflections, this lifelong presence rhymes the minor with the profound, weds the sacred and profane, and conjugates the sublime and grotesque through the act of unappeased examination.

Cynthia Lahti (b. 1963) lives and works in her birthplace of Portland, Oregon. She received a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design. Her work was most recently exhibited in *Postures: Jean Rhys in the Modern World* curated by Hilton Als at Michael Werner, London (2025) and *Cynthia Lahti: Little Storms* at James Fuentes, New York (2023-24). In 2023, the artist's drawings and sculptures were featured in the Kelly Reichardt film, *Showing Up*. Solo exhibitions include Ditch Projects (2017), Imogen Gallery (2017), Passages Bookshop (2016), and PDX Contemporary Art (2016) in Oregon. Permanent collections include the Portland Art Museum, Boise Art Museum, Columbia University Library, Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, Reed College, Stanford University's Bowes Art and Architecture Library, University of California, Santa Barbara, Library, and Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, among others. Prior to this exhibition, Lahti's work appeared in Los Angeles in *The Body, The Object, The Other* at Craft Contemporary, and she participated in the Iris Project Residency, both in 2020.

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