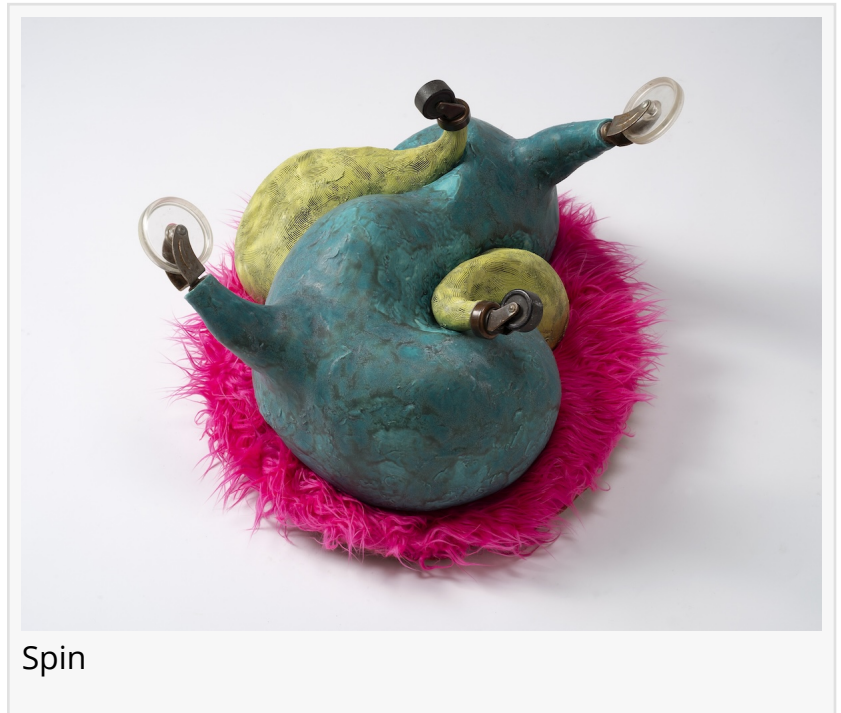


# Play Melds with Activism in Laura Van Duren's Revelers Opening Sept 14 at Gallery 825

*Laura Van Duren's solo exhibition "Revelers" embraces play as a potent form of activism—a tool to lift individual spirits and strengthen collective resilience.*

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, August 22, 2024  
/EINPresswire.com/ -- Bay Area Artist [Laura Van Duren's](#) solo show "Revelers" opens on September 14, 2024 at [Gallery 825](#), located at 825 N La Cienega Blvd, Los Angeles. The show will be on view through October 18, 2024. Viewers are invited to meet the artist at the opening reception from 1-5 pm on September 14. Additionally, an artist talk will be held on October 12, 2024, providing deeper insights into Van Duren's creative process and inspirations. Interested viewers should check with Gallery 825 for the schedule.



Spin

“

When was the last time you allowed yourself to play without the pressure of productivity or predefined goals?”

*Artist Laura Van Duren*

With “Revelers”, play becomes a potent form of activism—a tool that not only lifts individual spirits but also strengthens collective resilience. This exhibition invites viewers into a realm where play becomes a powerful antidote to the weight of contemporary times. Through Van Duren's ceramic mixed media assemblages, viewers are encouraged to reconnect with their capacity for uninhibited joy and physical expression. Revelers serves as a reminder that in the face of adversity, the ability to find

pleasure, forge connections, and celebrate the shared humanity is not just a comfort but a radical act of hope and solidarity.

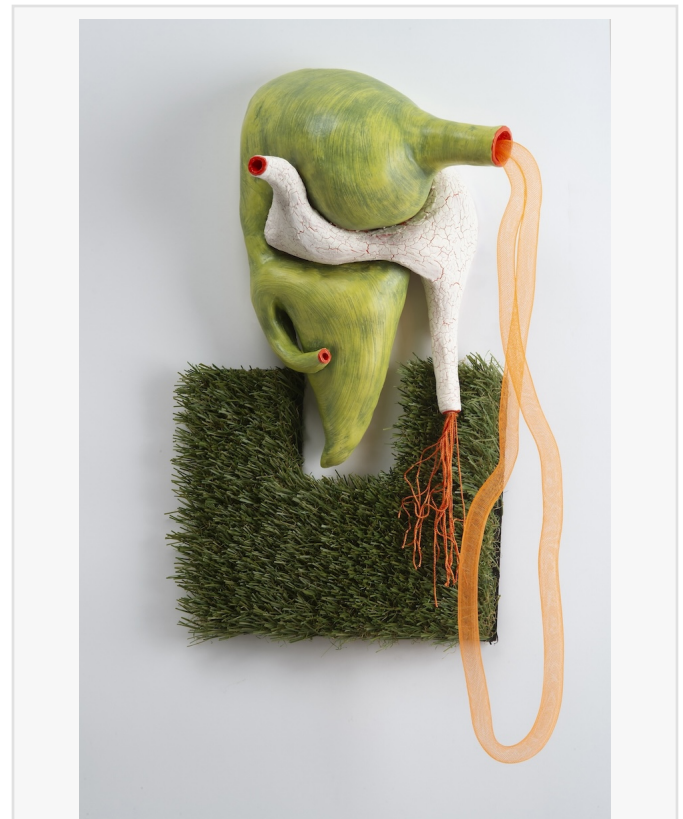
Van Duren's work showcases an energetic color palette of ceramic forms with an eclectic mix of materials such as, glycerin soap cast in vinyl bags, antique wheels, fake fur and cosplay textiles.

Each of the materials are chosen for their unique properties and symbolic significance. In her ceramic and vinyl piece "Crackle", two abstracted dancers find delight in play, symbolizing the broader societal implications of the right to play. Movements advocating this right emphasize community and self-expression in opposition to oppressive systems.

Her ceramic sculptures form a family of revelers, a raucous and festive gathering that embodies the principles of touch, weight, momentum, balance, and flow. Each piece is a testament to the evolving shape of human interaction, frozen in a moment of joyous celebration. This work challenges the status quo, illustrating that resistance can also be celebratory and joyous.

Van Duren's quest to find solace and resistance in the realm of play has shaped her journey. Amid contemporary challenges, Van Duren discovered the power of play through various forms, including contact improvisational dance events in the San Francisco Bay Area. Here, she oscillated between immersing herself in the dance and stepping back to capture the essence of the participants through sketching. This dual perspective allowed her to intimately experience the physical and emotional aspects of the dance while simultaneously translating them into abstracted visual forms for this new body of work.

In addition to her sculptures' confident, physical presence, Van Duren incorporates two-dimensional drawing as an essential element of her pieces. For decades, her sketchbooks have served as constant companions, continually filled with her observations of humanity and contemporary life. Her background in drawing, with an undergraduate degree from Carnegie Mellon University, significantly informs her artistic practice.



Tangle



Figure 8

Laura Van Duren is an interdisciplinarity artist based in Oakland, California. She is one of the founding members of Mercury 20 Gallery, situated in the heart of Oakland's art scene. She works with the Peter Voulkos family helping to manage the archival aspect of his collection which has had a profound influence on her practice. She is an adjunct professor teaching ceramics and sculpture at multiple community colleges. Her recent exhibitions in the San Francisco Bay Area include the Sonoma Museum of Art, Southern Exposure, Marin Museum of Contemporary Art and the Berkeley Art Center; she was also awarded an Open Studio residency at Haystack in Maine in 2023. Van Duren received her BFA in drawing from Carnegie Mellon University and completed her MFA in sculpture at San Francisco State University in 2017. @laura\_van\_duren

Gallery 825 is the exhibition arm of the Los Angeles Art Association. Purchased in 1958, the gallery, which is located in the heart of Los Angeles at 825 North La Cienega Boulevard, provides LAAA artists with a professional venue in which to show their work

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