



Nearness

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In the collaboration for Nearness, the artists explore where their work begins, but also where it ends.

There is a narrative trajectory bound up in the work as it is presented in tableaux: the objects are suspended in space and time; they arrest time and stretch it out, infinitely. Kim's ceramics and Anna's brass objects nest and nestle and frame and support one another. They hover close but without touching, and are animated and embodied. They relate.

Nearness begins with a conversation around two very different practices; the works to emerge offer weightlessness through elevation and suspension and through isolation of the connected pieces. The structures hold vessels or heads, acting as a pedestal, keeping the pots elevated from the ground, regally high. But the pots also appear to be constricted or constrained by their supports and frames. The vessels and frames keep each other separate from everything else: they're a codependent assemblage. Some of the pots sit like crowns atop their reflective brass bases whose cool, minimal lines are imbued with a personality and relatable form by their weighted-down headdress.

Here the connection between the object and the viewer may not be immediately clear because the work is so thoroughly self-contained in isolated spaces and moments. The pieces, when connected by the practice of Nearness, exclude us. They are raised, framed, suspended, entangled, and in this they are kept apart. The objects arrest time and we are outside, beholding the moment.

"There's a fine line between isolation and connection. It defines most human interaction."

You meet someone or spend time with them and maybe don't break through beyond small talk or pleasantries.

"Then you have that spark."

That moment of realising: "yes! we're on the same wavelength; there's something good here, something unique and special that we can get to"

"You might have that with looking at these pieces. You're just looking, and then suddenly they mean something."

"We're interested in the level of projection that the audience imposes on the figurative form."

"Yes, it's totally subjective."

We're looking for something to connect with, for something familiar in the hand-formed shapes and faces.

"Nearness is about forcing connection through proximity."

"Nearness has sensitivity to it, but there is also tension."

Nearness precludes use and touch. Separately you both create work that should be lifted up and touched and filled and worn; I can't touch any of these pieces for fear that it will all fall apart.

I'm not clumsy. I've just broken some pretty important things. The breakages are domestic: tiny catastrophic moments and usually accompanied by unnecessary tears. For some reason repair doesn't occur to me. Everything just gets thrown out.

As if things weren't precarious enough, only-just hanging together, hovering and teetering, on the verge of not working harmoniously, here I am to add some words into the mix. Something to latch onto that might describe and explain, that will probably expose, or just someone else's voice in your head.

But maybe a story will help to draw a line connecting one thing to another, making surprise revelations. But what if the story unsettles things, throws what's already off kilter off further still? *I'm suggesting we not entirely trust anything we see or read here.* The pieces might drop despite their careful cradles of brass or nervous hands. We'll hear that ear-grating sound of raw ceramic scraping the surface of another piece no matter how gently it's handled. And brass is softer than you'd think—it'll dent on unintended impact, or bend under too-heavy weight. *So just be careful, okay?*

The story of the objects inserts itself into those teetering spaces between pieces, it flashes off reflective surfaces, and squeezes beneath oddly-yet-perfectly-fitting props and supports. Words twist and jump between the works, relating to ideas floating around, above, in-between, and inside them.

Maybe this is always the question: where does the work of the collaboration begin, where does it end, and what happens in between?

It begins with a moment of nearness for two practices: a closeness of materials—brushed brass and glazed ceramic—that share an irregularity and a playfulness. The outcome tells a story of paradox: familiarity and isolation; connection and indifference. In between, the pieces balance perilously, they threaten to clink or scrape or topple.

From beginning to end, *Nearness* is willfully precarious.

