

NINO MIER GALLERY

LOS ANGELES | BRUSSELS | NEW YORK

Roger Herman
Motel California
New York | Tribeca
May 1 – June 8, 2024

Nino Mier Gallery is pleased to present *Motel California*, our second solo exhibition by Los Angeles-based artist Roger Herman at the gallery. The presentation will be on view at our 380 Broadway location from May 1 to June 8, 2024.

Motel California features a series of recent ceramic vessels, large-scale paintings on canvas, and painted tile tables on which some of the ceramics rest. The front of the gallery features a series of Herman's Mescal cups, tiny ceramic pots modeled after jicara. Herman's characteristic unruliness saturates the works, which have been glazed and re-glazed, formed and unformed, cut, scraped, and scuffed throughout the intuitive process of their making. Across canvas and ceramic, Herman unites his objects and their expressionistic surfaces in a sustained meditation on color, texture, material, processes, and form.

A trained painter, Herman turned to ceramic as a new medium for his compositions in the late nineties. The ceramics are therefore paintings too, their surfaces as considered as those of his canvas works. Many of the ceramics, like his canvas paintings, present configurations of malformed color blocks—degraded, rectangular shapes rendered in “impossible” color schemes. Other ceramics reflect forms and themes found in genres as diverse as manga, still life, and memento mori.

Herman is inclined toward creating works that are arresting precisely because they embrace a deliberate crudeness. His hand-built works eschew more conventional ceramic practices with their asymmetrical forms, large voids, and useless protrusions. He will often scrape at the form, or add material to it, until it reaches an awkwardness or grittiness that makes the work aesthetically gripping. He also will often fire ceramics multiple times in his kiln, drawn to the unpredictable transformations of color during the glazing process. When a work is looking too perfect, too pristine and harmonious, Herman cheekily calls it “perfectly horrible.” Then, he rectifies the situation.

Roger Herman (b. 1947, Saarbruecken, DE; lives and works in Los Angeles, CA) holds an MFA from the Akademie der Kuenste, Karlsruhe, DE. Exhibitions include Nino Mier Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Louis Lefebvre Galerie, Paris, FR; Sorry We're Closed, Brussels, BE; ACE Gallery, Los Angeles, CA; Richard Telles Fine Art, Los Angeles, CA, Galeria Mascota, Mexico City, MX; Carpenters Workshop Gallery, New York, NY and London, UK; Santa Monica Museum of Art, Santa Monica, CA; LACMA, Los Angeles, CA; and Jack Hanley Gallery, New York, NY, among many others. He co-founded the legendary Los Angeles gallery Black Dragon Society, and was on faculty for the Art Department at UCLA since 1985.