

TEA PARTY

with Ann Agee, Polly Apfelbaum, Lynda Benglis, Hanne Friis, Virgil Marti, Maria Nepomuceno, Louise Nevelson, Beverly Semmes, and Yeesookyung

June 3 – July 11, 2025

LOCKS GALLERY



Maria Nepomuceno, *Untitled*, 2014, clay, beads, and wood,
114 1/8 x 94 1/2 x 78 3/4 inches



Locks Gallery is pleased to present *Tea Party*, a group exhibition with Ann Agee (b. 1959), Polly Apfelbaum (b. 1955), Lynda Benglis (b. 1941), Hanne Friis (b. 1972), Virgil Marti (b. 1962), Maria Nepomuceno (b. 1976), Louise Nevelson (1899-1988), Beverly Semmes (b. 1958), and Yeesookyung (b. 1963). This exhibition features sculptures and mixed media works that transform traditionally decorative materials into subversive and sensuous art forms. Through playful material experimentation as well as cultural and art historical references, these nine artists go beyond a referential relationship to quintessentially “feminine” idioms. Objects intended to become decorative or functional become displays of embodied labor. Tradition is broken apart, and domesticity and excess is rendered wrought and profound, a twisted site of expansive power and joy..

Ceramics are a recurring trope used to intervene traditional associations of femininity and decorative art. In Beverly Semmes’s vibrant pots and collages, the vessel serves as a metaphor for the female body: an object meant to carry life, a projection of male desires. Clay pots in Brazilian-based Maria Neopomuceno’s *Untitled* (2014) hold amorphous growths of rope and beads, suggesting an outpouring flow of an infinite energy or spirit. Korean sculptor Yeesookyung affixes discarded porcelain shards to create Translated Vases, fabricating elaborate constructions of traditional Korean masterpieces. Ann Agee’s whimsical, rococo-like



Yeesoookyung, *Translated Vase 2019 TVCW2*, 2019,
ceramic shards, epoxy, and 24k gold leaf,
42 1/8 x 30 3/8 x 25 5/8 inches

porcelain sculptures fragment and reassemble motifs of domestic life, labor, and child bearing into playful, exuberant, and even mischievous arrangements.

Several artists use weaving and textiles to imbue inanimate objects with breath of their own. Norwegian-based Hanne Friis' hand-stitched *Column* (2019) transforms cotton and satin into a corporeal form, appearing on the verge of transformation. Beverly Semmes's humorous, phallic-like *Red Dress* towers over the viewer, suggesting to paradoxically conceal and reveal a female body. Maria Nepomuceno's beaded weavings also radiate out into space, like a natural growth, expanding and migrating without human intervention. Similarly, in *Green Space*, Polly Apfelbaum's hand-dyed velvet flowers spread infectiously across the floor, juxtaposing the angularity of interior space.

Sculptures by Lynda Benglis, Hanne Friis, and Beverly Semmes merge process with form, transforming their materiality into shapes which appear to contradict their physical nature. Plastic becomes dense and heavy as in Benglis' *Swinburne Egg I* (2009), and fabric becomes compact, as in Friis' *Tongue* (2025). Both works also seem to reference both the earth and body, swelling, contracting, and breathing on their own. Similarly, ceramics by Beverly Semmes are clunky and asymmetrical, revealing traces of the artist's physical labor; as put by curator Ingrid Schaffner, these pots are "gruntingly physical embodiments of the touch, the craft, the pleasure, and the work that goes into building even the most elemental of forms."

This exhibition will be on view in the second floor gallery and open to the public Tuesday through Saturday through the month of June, and Monday through Friday through the month of July.