

Press Release

Jane Yang-D'Haene / earthbound

Make Hauser & Wirth Southampton
19 August – 30 September 2023



On 19 August, Make Hauser & Wirth in Southampton will open 'earthbound,' the final exhibition of the summer. This presentation of work by ceramic artist Jane Yang-D'Haene marks Make's first collaboration with a US-based artist maker.

'Earthbound' showcases Yang-D'Haene's new body of ceramic works celebrating the artist's journey of reconnection with her birthplace of South Korea. Drawing upon her early memories of the country's landscape, Yang-D'Haene reinterprets a traditional form that has long fascinated her: the dalhangari, or Moon Jar. In redefining these smooth porcelain ceramics, she translates the mountains, rice fields and seas of her homeland into richly textured surfaces. The Moon Jar thus becomes Yang-D'Haene's framework for experimentation with gestures and glazing, which she uses to suggest narratives colored by deeply personal memories. Engaged in a dialogue between material and maker, her approach is process driven and experimental, working with blends of clay and varied glazes, creating hand-built forms fired multiple times which test the limits of her material.

These experimentations demonstrate Yang-D'Haene's long-held desire to push the boundaries of her medium. Juxtaposing radically different finishes, she creates tension between interior and exterior, form and function, and at the same time conveys a sense of touch, imperfection and irregularity. Her practice explores her South Korean heritage and her identity as an American and Brooklynite equally—cultural orientations that meld together to produce a distinctive character in the work.

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About the artist

Born in South Korea, Jane Yang-D'Haene moved to New York in 1984, where she attended the Cooper Hewitt School of Architecture. Both her education and later experience as an interior designer for a premier architecture firm helped shape her fascination with art and design. Yang-D'Haene began working with ceramics in 2016, drawing upon her cultural heritage and multifaceted design background to create a highly researched and fresh body of work.

Yang-D'Haene creates ceramics inspired by Korean dalhangari, or Moon Jars. These forms, historically made from two hemispherical halves of clay joined and fired to become a smooth porcelain vessel, have dominated her practice over the last three years. Although derived from these polished objects, Yang-D'Haene's Moon Jars are meticulously textured. The artist describes the historical framework that Moon Jars provide not as a blueprint nor as an adversary, but as a vehicle for contemporary experimentation. Her relationship to clay itself is similar: Yang-D'Haene explores and stretches its bounds without being restrained by its history.

This exploration results in conceptually challenging objects that refute traditional relationships between form and function. There is a sculptural quality to her works, which crater, bloom and percolate like planetary bodies. In this way, the vessels read like celebrations not only of nature and the universe at large but of the earth in specific, and therefore of the artist's beloved medium. She uses a range of experimental glazing and ceramic techniques to render these unique surfaces, embracing the often-unpredictable process of clay firing. In some cases, the artist even describes her final vessels as unfinished. Flaws are the conceptual and formal core of the work; they imbue her pieces with an energy that complements the fluid tonal shifts she produces across their surfaces. With her oeuvre, Yang-D'Haene demonstrates an ability to deliver beauty from imperfection.

About Make

Make Hauser & Wirth is a dedicated program for contemporary making and the crafted object, committed to showcasing some of the world's best emerging and established artist-makers. Make is a natural extension of the wider Hauser & Wirth gallery ethos, embracing art, craft, gardens, food and architecture. Since launching in 2018 in Somerset, UK, Make has presented work by over eighty artist-makers and provided valuable insights into material-led processes and the rich narratives of their practices. Works exhibited by Make embrace material truth, provenance, sustainability and the value of emotional engagement with the handmade. In addition to a varied exhibition program, Make has hosted practical workshops, discussions and studio visits to expand learning and engagement with makers and global craft organizations.

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Caption and courtesy information:

Jane Yang-D'Haene, Portrait 2023

Photo: Bill Zules