

Gallerist

ON VIEW

Jesse Greenberg at Derek Eller Gallery

BY ANDREW RUSSETH



'Orange Receiving Sys.' (2013) by Jesse Greenberg. (Courtesy the artist and Derek Eller Gallery)

Since at least the late 1960s, a strain has been present in sculpture of work that looks as though it is in the process of melting down, falling apart or crumbling away. Recently, though, inflected by digital and high-tech developments, the character of such work seems to be shifting—it still looks undone, but it's in the midst of morphing into new forms, building upon itself.

Jesse Greenberg is among the young artists exploring this field with great verve. His **New York solo debut** has him working with glossy, translucent urethane resin in ambers, blue-blacks and tangerines, which he quickly manipulates on flat surfaces in liquid form so that it hardens into amorphous, oozing structures, filled with holes. Mounted on walls, they look like liquid stained glass or melted crayons. Some pieces have colored BB gun pellets scattered throughout, emphasizing the speed and the antigravity forces that undergird his art, while also

suggesting petri dishes and molecular processes.

Like many of his artist peers, Mr. Greenberg openly embraces luscious ornamentation. Decorative is not a dirty word for them; neither is rococo. Dazzling with surface effects, they recall the Los Angeles's Finish Fetish artists, reared on 1960s car culture, particularly **Peter Alexander** and his slick resin sculptures. Meanwhile, other pieces by Mr. Greenberg, small polyurethane bricks that sprout what look like sea urchins, saffron or caviar within them, suggest George Ohr, Ken Price and Ron Nagle, all of whom unrepentantly embraced visual pleasure.

The Finish Fetishists' reputations suffered over time, wrongly, because of a perceived lack of seriousness in their work. As tastes changed, a flair for visual delectation was read as lack of conceptual rigor. That's the risk that Mr. Greenberg and artists like him run. For now, though, he seems to have found a sweet spot in a process-oriented formalism that packs a retinal punch.

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