

### subj/objects - disobedient domestic sculpture – by Delpha Hudson

Objects are full of historical and symbolic accumulations, and are used in combination with small stoneware figures. Small, quotidian domestic found objects have their own resonances and language, and gestural fragmented figures are made to create dialogue with these objects. They are miniature *combinages* that are small enough to be held in your hand, and overlooked. They are intimate even promiscuous, chaotically embracing and rejecting commodity and desire.



*Life is a surreal ride*, 18x5x8cm, plastic fish, drift wood corkscrew and stoneware

Humorous, playful or traumatic, these fragmented and fractured figures have an agency all of their own. They are contra-punctual and ambivalent, intentional 'disobedient objects,' in that they may reference in diverse ways, feminist, anti-capitalist or global issues. Spontaneous and disorderly, the process of the making and firing the tiny ceramic stoneware figures is quite prolonged, yet initial moments with the object, its form and its possible meanings, are developed through drawing, or more often quickly and roughly made. The clay forms react, and play with the objects.

Contemporary sculpture and its 'up-cycling' of rubbish is an art of contingency, and *Unmonumental*, 'traces a new lineage in which the pauperism of Arte Povera is rediscovered but tied to a society that is far from poor.'

The majority of artists have little or no source of income and must use what comes to hand – necessity is the mother of invention. The figures are like maquettes or *bozzetti*. It is good to engage with the stuff of everyday life yet not take up unnecessary space in an overcrowded world.

The domestic scale is practical and has a resonance with other aspects of my feminist arts practice that uses the figure metaphysically, gesturally, emotionally, as a body, potential female subject that is performed and can be written (*écriture féminine*). Historical resonances, and possible cultural references can only be playful

at this scale, and with these materials. They mimic a high art aesthetic, but are made out of crap. I would if I could dedicate them to housewives and women who work in the home. They are 'monuments in reverse' of women– a bit like the unknown soldier, but smaller and unheard of.

Much of my other performance and assemblage work has worked around ideas about dialogue between people, conversations and things (with reference to Bakhtin, Kristeva and intertextuality). Polyphony, instead of silence, lies in the intersections between, an inter-text between fragmented subjects and disparate materials make tiny monuments to invisible women. -



*Enough*, ceramic and object assemblage , approx 21x10x8cm

#### **Book References:**

*Disobedient Objects*, Eds, Flood, C. & Grindon G.,V& A Publishing, 2014, from the show at the V&A)

*Unmonumental, the object in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*, Phaidon, NY Bowery Museum