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Installation View,
*International
Ceramics
Friendship Park*

Photograph
Brian Guido

Alex Reed “International Ceramics Friendship Park”

September 12 –
October 27 2019

Marta is pleased to present their inaugural exhibition, “International Ceramics Friendship Park”, featuring a new body of work by Los Angeles-based ceramic artist Alex Reed. Comprising several design objects and a large-scale architectural model, Reed’s work prompts a joyful yet critical examination of the role of craft practices in contemporary society, and mines their potential to spark political imagination.

The exhibition’s centerpiece—the Friendship Park of the show’s title—is a 4.0 × 4.0-ft., 1:100-scale architectural model posited as urban masterplan. Civic landmarks like the Potters’ Pension & Trust Tower and the Tomb of the Unknown Craftsperson are displayed in miniature, rendered in a variety of materials common to both the ceramics studio and the practice of architectural model-making. Viewers are encouraged to imagine a grand proposal for a speculative future urbanism in which craftspeople have seized the means of production and representation of their work and bodies.

Complementing the Park itself are a series of domestically-scaled ceramic objects installed throughout the space. Wall lighting, functional sculptures, and a display of glaze-test tiles from the artist’s studio offer practical and immediate ways for the viewer to engage, contemplate, and activate the possibilities of Reed’s imagined utopia. With a welcoming sense of levity accompanied by formal exploration, Reed adopts the Modernist Urban Plan to propose new ways to celebrate and honor the craftsperson’s labor and contribution to culture.

Alex Reed’s work spans independent studio production and ceramic design for industry. Whether fabricating speculative utopias or designing and producing functional and decorative objects, his work utilizes rigorous craft training and technical insights from a background in commercial manufacturing. Reed has recently shown work at the MAK Center Los Angeles, Craft Contemporary, and with The Future Perfect; he is currently the artist-in-residence at Owl Bureau (Highland Park, L.A.). This is Reed’s first solo exhibition in Los Angeles.

Located in the center of Los Angeles’ Echo Park neighborhood, Marta is a storefront exhibition space that showcases creative practitioners working in and around the applied arts.

Committed to supporting artists, designers, and craftspeople whose works range in medium, scale, audience, and intention, Marta’s programming celebrates an object’s life in domestic space.

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