

MATTHEW MARKS GALLERY

1062 North Orange Grove, Los Angeles, California 90046 323-654-1830 matthewmarks.com

Contemporary
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.la

Ron Nagle at Matthew Marks

March 22, 2017
Text by Hana Cohn



Ron Nagle, *Don and Juan* (2016).
Ceramic, catalyzed
polyurethane, and epoxy resin,
3.9 x 4.4 x 5.75 inches. Image
courtesy of the artist and
Matthew Marks Gallery.

In 15 glass cubes, and four glazed niches, frozen theaters are in in various states of action; drips, stretches, slips, peels, hovers, leans, and kisses. With Ron Nagle, chroma finds volume, texture, and personality. *Ice Breaker*, currently on view at Los Angeles' Matthew Marks gallery, is Nagle's largest exhibition in the city to date. Of the 19 sculptural works featured in the exhibition (all made in 2016), many nod to traditional pottery finishes, with their lacquered or crackled glazes, and flourishes of the ornate, as in *Glorious Assemblage*. Nagle's combination of ceramic, polyurethane, epoxy resin, and acrylic transform familiar forms of the decorative, the natural, and the uncannily familiar, into something utterly and delightfully foreign.

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Ron Nagle, *Ice Breaker*
(Installation view). Image
courtesy of the artist and
Matthew Marks Gallery.

Nagle's keen material contrast animates these small-scale works. Metallic blobs hover with extra-terrestrial ease in *Historical Land Mind*, while a slick patch of red inches up (or down?) the cragged, grey surface of *Elusive Combinations*. But what is truly satisfying about these works is the Nagle's spatial sensitivity. He makes delicious the tenuous moment before certainty; the work sits frozen—is it coming? Going? A lumpy white pillar pouts (or purses) its gilded lips in *Message to Raphael*. Each work is so fanciful in its finishes and textures that it flirts with being vapid material experiment. But it is the *Littlest Murmur*—two blocks with the soft sheen of plasticine, huddled on a shelf of fluorescent orange froth, their edges a breath's width apart—that catalyzes these abstract shapes into emotive actors. Each element is self-conscious and sentient; in each, Nagle creates the potential to see ourselves.

Ron Nagle: *Ice Breaker* runs January 21st–April 8th, 2017 at Matthew Marks (1062 N Orange Grove Avenue, West Hollywood, CA 90046).



Ron Nagle, *Sandmandia* (2016).
Ceramic, glaze, catalyzed
polyurethane, epoxy resin, ink
and acrylic, 3.9 x 9 x 2.1 inches.
Image courtesy of the artist and
Matthew Marks Gallery.



Ron Nagle, *Message to Raphael*
(2016). Ceramic, glaze,
porcelain, catalyzed
polyurethane, epoxy resin and
acrylic, 5.5 x 4.5 x 2.5 inches.
Image courtesy of the artist and
Matthew Marks Gallery.



**Ron Nagle, *Ice Breaker*
(Installation view). Image
courtesy of the artist and
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**Ron Nagle, *Ice Breaker*
(Installation view). Image
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