

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

U.S. EDITION Friday, October 11, 2013 As of 6:47 PM EDT

Lyrical Forms, Social Commentary and Handiwork

Gallery Exhibitions of Hiroyuki Hamada, Nicole Cherubini and Société Réaliste

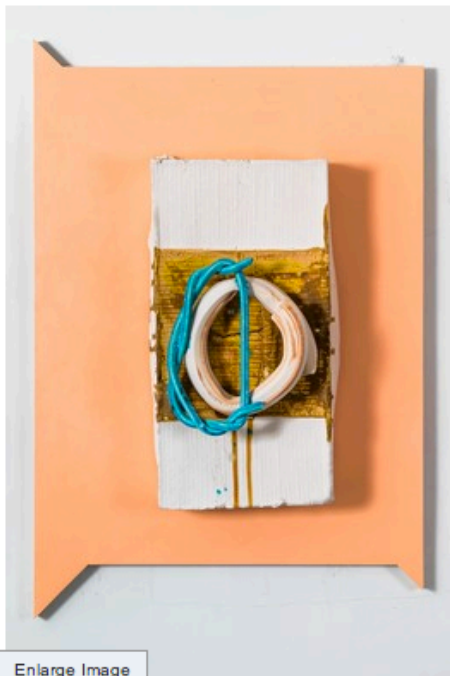
By Peter Plagens

Nicole Cherubini: In and Out of Weeks

Tracy Williams

521 W. 23rd St., (212) 229-2757

Through Oct. 26



[Enlarge Image](#)

Tracy Williams, Ltd.

Nicole Cherubini's 'The Dew' (2013)

The difficulty "the crafts" have in serious galleries is double-barreled. On the one hand, ceramics (or woodworking or metalsmithing or weaving, etc.) are tacitly required to break out of the ghetto of functionality. On the other hand, practitioners with ambitions in Chelsea or other gallery neighborhoods don't want the easy assimilation that comes with anything-goes postmodernism—e.g., a big hybrid work with a rug under a sculpture next to a pot nestled in a tapestry and containing a handmade toy.

Nicole Cherubini (b. 1970) approaches the problem in her particular discipline—ceramics, in which she has a degree from the Rhode Island School of Design—with a triple-track solution. Least successfully, she essentially parodies the ornate vessel with examples that look offhanded.

More effectively, Ms. Cherubini combines potlike ceramic forms with geometric framing platforms made from wood and fiberboard. But the best works in the exhibition are informally adroit sculptures such as "The Dew" (2013), in which the vessel reference has been left almost entirely behind. Ms. Cherubini is a good enough artist, however, so that the show as a whole is quite satisfying.

Mr. Plagens is an artist and writer in New York..

A version of this article appeared October 11, 2013, on page A20 in the U.S. edition of The Wall Street Journal, with the headline: Lyrical Forms, Social Commentary and Handiwork.