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PAUL MASEYK *FOLLY*

In *Folly*, Paul Maseyk returns to a mode of making central to his artistic identity: the large, semi-autobiographical vessel. Founded in ancient Greek forms and decorative traditions, these monumental works mark a kind of homecoming. Their necks and bases carry dense frieze-work built line by line through slip-trailing and brushwork, while their bodies unfold into sprawling narratives drawn from fragments of Maseyk's life, imagination, and visual memory.

This return is not nostalgic but deliberately demanding—an artistic and physical test after years spent on other projects. Recent work has seen Maseyk range widely, from functional tableware to the ambitious multi-venue project *Jugs in New Zealand Painting*. The slow, exacting rhythm of his Greek inspired vessels had been paused, their demands set aside. Re-entering this practice required recalibration: of pace, patience, and the creative stamina these works insist upon.

For this exhibition, Maseyk drew inspiration from *The Complete Collection of Antiquities from the Cabinet of William Hamilton*, an encyclopaedic study of classical form. From it he gathered silhouettes that echo antiquity, though the resulting vessels are unmistakably contemporary.

Maseyk describes the process of adorning his ceramics as part stream of consciousness, part sheer willpower. Imagery accumulates gradually; themes rarely arrive fully formed. Early ideas may offer direction, but more often the vessel evolves through intuitive associations, shifting as each mark alters its momentum.

The result is not a single narrative but a constellation of surreal, humorous, and enigmatic scenes—carefully arranged yet open to interpretation. Though embedded in personal experience, Maseyk withholds explanation, inviting viewers to speculate, interpret, and project.

His devotion to handmaking is evident in every mark. There is pride in crafting an object so intricate that a viewer cannot help but wonder how it was made, or what it means. This wonder becomes part of the object's longevity: a pot without a fixed story can continue to accrue new ones.

Accompanying the ceramics is a suite of paintings titled *Rainbow Girl*. They are made on the reverse sides of layered wallpaper pulled from Maseyk's first home—an early 1900's villa in Pūtiki, Whanganui. These salvaged sheets form the unconventional canvases for works that, like the vessels, embrace reinvention.

The exhibition's title, *Folly*, gestures to this productive ambiguity. Evoking structures built for ornament, whimsy, or delight, Maseyk's vessels celebrate the extravagance of making something beautiful simply because one must.

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