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## MUSEUM HIGHLIGHTS BY DANI DODGE

Explore the spaces in between in "Interstitial"  
Through August 6, 2017, at Pasadena Museum of California Art

From Merriam-Webster:

Definition of interstice  
a space that intervenes between things; especially: one between closely spaced things

In "Interstitial" at the Pasadena Museum of California Art, curator John David O'Brien pulled together seven Los Angeles-based artists to create a contemplation of space. Each piece incorporates everyday objects into the extraordinary, and together, they form a treasure hunt of joyful exploration.

For instance, Joel Otterson's "American Portable Pottery Museum" is a rolling collection of vintage ceramics arranged by color and shape. A collection that may have been kitschy at the county fair now challenges the hierarchies of culture. In the same room is Jeff Colson's "Stacks," which on first glance appears to be random stacks. This time it is paper on a desk, as if in mid-work mode before our push for paperless workplaces. But the stacks are actually rendered in wood, paint, and shellac. No papers will be shuffled on this desk.

Other artists in the show are Renee Lotenero, Kristen Morgan, Rebecca Ripple, Aili Schmeltz, and Shirley Tse.

"The aspect that ties all the work together is their relationship to the world of everyday objects," O'Brien said. "There is quite a difference in the transformation of the objects that Rebecca or Shirley puts them through as compared to the almost trompe l'oeil qualities of Jeff or Kristen, but essentially I think that they are all both recognizable as something from the world we inhabit and an abstract version of that."

In addition to being a curator, O'Brien is a teacher, a writer, an organizer, and an artist represented by Causey Contemporary in New York City and Galleria Alberto Miralli in Viterbo, Italy.

"I am most interested in making or adding to an art world, not just being an artist who makes art objects and then tries to get them to the marketplace," he said.

"Interstitial" does just that. From one piece to the next, the works build on each other. Tse's complex "Vital Organ Series: Audio," a metal sculpture that looks like a musical instrument but on closer inspection appears to mimic a human ear, is contrasted with the Schmeltz's seemingly simple "Brick." What appears to be a random brick left on the ground is actually a bronze sculpture, which again questions our idea of mundane.

This again contrasts with Morgan's sculptures, which appear to be discarded vintage toys and cards, but are actually made of fragile, unfired, and painted clay.

But not everything is playing with idea of small, everyday objects. Ripple's "Balzac" is an impressive, towering work of vacuum-formed vinyl and aluminum. And Lotenero takes the idea of her own neighborhood and smashes it upon the museum floor in the most magnificent way.

Accentuating the sense of the objects as everything was the curator's decision to leave the walls bare of text.

"I hope the visitors walk away with the sense of the kind of majestic beauty that art can give everyday objects," O'Brien said. "I hope the visitors also notice the exquisite crafting that each artist works with, even if they're going in very different directions individually."

### Related programs:

Family Day  
Saturday, May 27, 12-5 p.m.  
Participate in family-focused fun art projects and gallery tours

PMCA's 15<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
Friday, June 2, 12-6 p.m.  
Enjoy free admission, extended hours and special programs

Exhibition Walkthrough: Extra-Ordinary  
Saturday, June 3, 4 p.m.  
Look at the spaces in between during a walkthrough with "Interstitial" curator John David O'Brien

Children's Workshop: Sculpting Everyday Objects  
Saturday June 24, 2-4 p.m.  
Inspired by "Interstitial," create sculpture using objects and material from everyday life. Bring an object from home to incorporate into the artwork.

### Pasadena Museum of California Art

Other exhibitions currently on display:  
The Golden Twenties: Portraits and Figure Paintings by Joseph Kleitsch and Gustave Baumann in California

Hours:  
Open Wednesday-Sunday, 12-5 p.m. and the third Thursday of each month, 12-8 p.m.  
Admission:  
\$7 for adults; \$5 for seniors (62+); \$5 for students and educators; free for PMCA members and children (12 and under).  
Free the first Friday and the third Thursday of each month.  
Location:  
490 E. Union St., Pasadena, CA 91101  
Website: pmcaonline.org

