



TONI ROSS: *unearthed*
April 7 - May 1, 2011
Artist's Reception: Thursday, April 7, 2011, 6 - 8PM

ARC Fine Art LLC is pleased to announce the upcoming exhibition of ceramics by artist Toni Ross. Opening on Thursday, April 7, 2011, with an Artist's Reception and Talk from 6-8pm, *Toni Ross-unearthed* demonstrates the artist's keen sensitivity to and mastery of her chosen material: clay. Living and working in Wainscott, NY on the eastern end of Long Island, Ross and her work have been influenced by the light and natural landscape of the surrounding fields, dunes, and oceans. In addition to suggesting the powerful simplicity of ancient Cycladic art, the exhibited pieces reveal influences as far reaching as Giorgio Morandi, Gerhardt Richter and traditional Japanese ceramics.

Trained as a ceramicist, painter and sculptor, Ross approaches her work with a collective perspective, lending her ceramics the monumentality of sculpture and the exquisiteness of painting. Created by Ross between 2008 - 2010, this ensemble of approximately twenty pieces ranges from intimate, lidded boxes one can hold in a single hand to more robust sculptures measuring up to two feet in height. Also on display are several examples of Ross's evocative ovals and stacks, all of which possess a unique structure, surface texture, palette, and overall aesthetic. Often infused with vessel vernacular, she thinks of her work as containers; containers of time, emotions, experience. At the same time, however, she approaches the pieces much like a painter approaches a canvas, each open to a wealth of possibility when brush meets surface. In works like *Split-Notched Figure*, *Tall Shouldered Vessel* and *Tall White Figure 2*, the female form is subtly and eloquently evoked. By contrast, the forms of *Wide Belly Vessel with Squares* and *White Long Neck Bottle* suggest a more utilitarian function. The ovals as a group recall ancient Cycladic figures reflecting Ross's inspiration from earlier cultures. In works like *Afrique* and a corresponding oval titled *07.1032*, abstract patterning reigns, while in others, like *07.1044* and *08.1007*, tone and hue are paramount. Ross's palette ranges from bold, blazing passages of reds and oranges to cool, placid hues of blues and grays, imbuing each piece with its own character.

This collection of work is coil and slab formed and embellished with applications of *shino*, a Japanese style glaze first used in the Momoyama period of the late sixteenth century. *Shino* ranges dramatically in color and texture, depending on application, ambient atmosphere and firing process. Ross applies *shino* either to the entire piece or to the interior alone where it is encouraged to seep through the clay wall. Patterns emerge on the surfaces, often appearing to illuminate the piece from within. In other instances, the *shino* is abraded to expose the grayed, fire-touched clay underneath, a reminder of process and a sense of time passed. *Shino* possesses endless variations and is never replicable from piece to piece. This leads to a natural collaboration between artist and the elements that never ceases to draw Ross deeper into exploration of form, surface, and time. There is a search for identity as well as a desire to capture the beauty of line and form, to explore the space in between and a deep seated, keenly felt desire to know more, learn more, see more.

Ross has exhibited her work in both solo and group shows since 1999. In 2010, her work was included in an exhibition of American ceramists working with *shino* glazes at the Clay Art Center in Port Chester, New York, and two shows on coil built ceramics in Maryland.

ARC Fine Art is located at 3113 Bronson Road in Fairfield, Connecticut and is open by appointment. Further inquiries, please contact Adrienne Ruger Conzelman at 203 895 9595.