



Tony Moore: In the Age of the Innocents

April 26, 2007 By D. Dominick Lombardi



The title of this exhibition, *In the Age of the Innocents*, brings to mind *The Age of Innocence*, an Edith Wharton novel about society, class, and culture. However, I suspect sculptor Tony Moore is not making a reference, with his spelling of the word innocents, to the rules of the society. Moore, instead, is addressing the state of the world today, and how so many moral codes are being broken while so many innocents are dying. You only need look at a television news broadcast for a moment, skim a newspaper, or tune into a talk radio station to be reminded how many victims of unnecessary violence there are.

But Moore addresses this fact with great care and sympathy for the victim, that missing body and soul that has left its mark so deeply on us. In a very succinct way, Moore works with large, rather minimal slabs of various types of clays, creating works such as "He," "Castle Cross," "Shrine," and "Regarding Others." Here, we see imprints, sometimes quite deep, of hands and feet that bring to mind presences of things that once were: thoughtful and proud individuals who stood up to their fates and left with their dignity and morals.

I found "He" in particular, with its deepest footprints, to be the most spiritual and meditative. Some philosopher or thinker stood here - someone who orated and preached, doing what s/he could for others with the time s/he had.

There are other works too, which suggest a reverence for the lost. "The Gathering," for instance, which is tombstone shaped, should easily remind most of a grave marker. But here, we are more mesmerized by the work's details - the imprints of the geranium leaves, and the carefully shaped areas where the artist applies gravel, giving this work the look of having once been attached to something else. Maybe it was a corner stone or supportive post, or perhaps just something insignificant that, with time and erosion, became unique and beautiful.

The centerpiece of the show is "In the Age of the Innocents," a pivotal work of our age of unreason that features numerous cast heads of the artist himself, contained in a rusted metal cage. Since they are white heads of various discolorings and textures, I assumed Moore was working with colored glazes, but gallery director Janet Kurnatowski informed me that these modulations in the white porcelain are quite natural, and occur during the four consecutive days of wood firing the artist employs. "It all depends on where they are placed in the kiln."

But that is more for the ceramic artist who is looking for some new technique to appropriate. What is more important is that this piece speaks about the multitudes, the masses, the variations and intricacies of life, and the precariousness of it all. — D. Dominick Lombardi

In the Age of the Innocents
through May 5

[Galeria Janet Kurnatowski](#)

205 Norman Avenue, Brooklyn NY

Moore speaks about his work on April 28th at 4 PM.

D. Dominick Lombardi is an artist with representation in Kasia Kay Art Projects and Lisa Boyle Gallery in Chicago, and Van Brunt Gallery in Beacon, NY; a writer with Sculpture, DART, & Magazine and NYARTS; and an independent curator.
