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For Immediate Release:

BRENDAN TANG: *SOUVENIRS FROM EARTH*

Opening reception: September 10, 2 – 4 p.m.
Exhibition dates: September 10 – October 11,
2016

Souvenirs from Earth at Gallery Jones brings together pieces from Brendan Tang's *Manga Ormolu* series that have been garnering critical attention nationally and internationally, entirely new work from the studio and an exciting new series of suspended sculptures that play in the realm of pop cultural appropriation.



Manga Ormolu Version 4.0w, ceramic,
15" x 8" x 5"

Brendan Tang's ceramic creations have been exhibited and collected widely. In recent years his work has been exhibited at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Ariana Museum in Geneva, Musée Magnelli in Vallauris, France as well as in Shanghai, Limoges, Seattle, Kansas City, Reno, Toronto and Montréal to name just a few.

The following is an excerpt from the catalogue that accompanies the exhibition, written by Shaun Dacey, Curator at Contemporary Art Gallery, Vancouver:

For Tang, the initial impetus of the work emerges from the historical context of ormolu. The act of Europeans adding ormolu (gold and bronze gilt mounts) to Chinese made ceramics emerged in 18th century France after the explosion of Ming Dynasty ceramic imports in preceding centuries. Through the development of new techniques and experimentation in vessel shape and colour influenced by contact with Islam, Chinese ceramics emerged as a highly sought after luxury object in European aristocracy. Capitalizing on this, the industry shifted to focus on export to the west. Chinese ceramists began to produce compositions specifically for their western audience. European importers in turn began to adding ormolu to 'westernize' the vessels. These original mash-ups are a physical representation of the cross-cultural exchange at the time. They speak to the evolutionary nature of a globalized market, and a complex timeline of influence from Islam to China, and eventually Europe.

Responding to this early modern mash-up ormolu, Tang offers us a skilled slight of the hand. When one encounters these impossibly surreal objects, the spectacle is astounding. But, on closer inspection the magic trick is slowly exposed. The artist's hand becomes made evident. Perfect copies, the two duelling forms are fantasy. Beyond this showmanship and baroque virtuosity, the series speaks to a transience. Tang's connection of traditional and future forms rest in-between the malleability and friction of ethno-pop-cultural identity, an amalgam of western perceptions of 'Asian-ness'. As apparent by its titling, *Manga Ormolu* is both hybrid and transitional, a very physical collision between compositional and stylistic tropes that evoke cultural stereotypes.