



Ben Jackel, *nEUROn*, 2012, mahogany, graphite, and ebony
5 x 34 x 48 in. (12.7 x 86.4 x 121.9 cm)

BEN JACKEL

ZERO PERCENT CONTAINED

24 May - 30 June 2012

Reception for the artist: Thursday, 24 May, 6 - 8 pm

Venice, CA – L.A. Louver is pleased to present new sculptures by Los Angeles-based artist **Ben Jackel**.

“I feel as if I am going in the opposite direction to the world in the way I make my work: I use primitive materials and old traditions, to look at our contemporary world.” – Ben Jackel

Jackel draws on his interest in the history of warfare, and the tools that humans use to make war, to inspire a new series of sculptures. Made from planks of wood bound together and roughly hewn with an axe, Jackel creates a giant version of a 15th century halberd that stands over 13 feet tall. Titled *Pay Attention*, 2012 (its name inspired by a comment made by L.A. police chief Charlie Beck during a 2011 radio interview), Jackel coats the surface facets of the wood with layers of graphite that he burnishes to a rich luster. This massive form dwarves the viewer, who is forced to engage intimately with the planes of this lethal and ancient tool of power.

Evoking a different form of power, the artist’s most recent sculpture *Come What May*, 2012, depicts a cross-section of Hurricane Katrina, made in wood. It is a complex form that conveys the channels of energy of this mighty wind; the solidity of its materiality starkly contrasting the reality of this monstrous force of nature that was the source of its inspiration.

Created in mahogany and coated in graphite, a series of spy planes and unmanned military jets are suspended in the gallery at eye level. Jackel was inspired by drone planes currently in production: from the U.S. *Phantom Ray*, 2011 to the recently unveiled European joint venture *nEUROn*, 2012. Their elegant, sleek forms beguile as they also threaten; menace is imbued within their beauty. These are tools of surveillance, and used for strategic attack; unmanned, their very presence indicates an unknown terror yet to come. As Jackel states, “They have revolutionized warfare: ‘man versus man’ just got a little more complicated because one of the men is no longer present.”



Ben Jackel, *Wrapped Firehose*, 2012, stoneware and beeswax
24 x 16 x 4 in. (61 x 40.6 x 10.2 cm)

In counterpoint to these dark phantoms of war, Jackel has made a series of emergency tools out of stoneware and beeswax – fire hydrants, standpipes, alarm bells and fire hoses. Jackel instills a quiet dignity into these silent saviors, which are usually ignored by passers-by until they are summoned into action by crisis. Jackel gives each hydrant and standpipe a distinctive personality, and leads us to reexamine their form and symbolic resonance. The centerpiece of the group, and the most complex, is *Garrison*, 2012, which is rendered after a six-headed hydrant that Jackel discovered by a high rise in downtown Los Angeles. *Garrison*, “a group of troops stationed in a fortress or town to defend it” (OED), is translated into this inanimate object: a powerful force at the ready, created to serve in an emergency of unimaginable horror. The fire hydrants and standpipes also inspire the title of the exhibition: *Zero Percent Contained*, which is a term used to describe a fire over which firefighters have no control. It was an expression used during the initial days of L.A.’s 2009 extensive and devastating Station Fire, and has resonated with Jackel since that time.



Ben Jackel, *Garrison*, 2012, stoneware and beeswax
18 x 40 x 21 in. (45.7 x 101.6 x 53.3 cm)

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Born and raised in Aurora, Colorado, Jackel received his BFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder, before moving to Los Angeles to pursue a MFA at the University of California, Los Angeles. At UCLA, Jackel studied with renowned sculptor Adrian Saxe, who proved a critical influence in the development of Jackel’s work, particularly in the use of clay as his primary material. Following graduation in 2005, while pursuing his own art, Jackel worked for another of his professors, Charles Ray, and quickly rose to studio head. Following his inclusion in the exhibition *Rogue Wave ’07*, L.A. Louver began representing Jackel, and in 2009 presented Jackel’s first solo exhibition *Compliance Solutions*. In 2011, Jackel left Ray’s studio and now works in Los Angeles as a full-time artist.

Concurrently on exhibition at L.A. Louver:

South gallery and Second floor gallery - *Don Suggs: Thermal Pool Paintings and Paradise Prints*

New paintings and archival inkjet prints.

Skyroom - *Deborah Butterfield*

A new bronze sculpture

L.A. Louver is open Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Validated parking available.

Please note that the gallery will be closed during the month of July 2012 for major improvements to the gallery building. We shall be open in August by appointment. Our first exhibition of the new season will be recent paintings by **Tony Bevan**, 6 September through 6 October, 2012.

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