



Office Culture:

BODIES OF WORK / BODIES OF THOUGHT

Jillian Mayer

×

Jason Jacques Gallery

c/o

USM Modular Furniture

Curated by Grace Nkem







Office Culture: Bodies of Work / Bodies of Thought

Jillian Mayer x Jason Jacques Gallery c / o USM Modular Furniture
Curated by Grace Nkem

Office Culture: Bodies of Work / Bodies of Thought poses a question about the cultural significance of, as it were, offices— it is an attempt at better understanding their place within our cultural imaginary as a potential setting of contemporary psychodrama, the sites of many of our triumphs and tribulations, wants and desires, successes and failures.

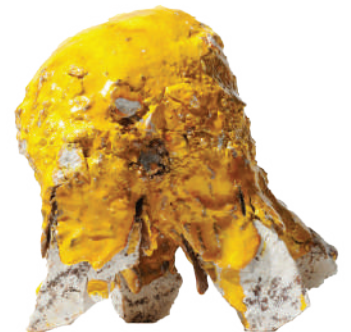
If we take workspaces, whether open-plan or cubicle-based, to be the ‘public’ iteration of the office, then we may take the the psychiatrists’ offices as the private one— a space arranged not around productivity, but rigorous introspection and vulnerability. In as much, Office Culture is a surreal attempt to merge the two extremes that confronts us with the gap between the ‘personal’ and the ‘professional.’

The question at hand is as follows: how do our thoughts shape interior spaces and built environments— and how do they, in turn, shape our thoughts?

Aside from the Oval Office, the best-known office in Western history is likely Freud’s: a highly functional, comfortable, and historically significant little room lined with carpets that draped over the couch and up the wall. It was filled with with sculptures, photographs, and prints, lined with bookshelves and draped with heavy curtains; to this day, it remains a culturally formative, highly compelling space. What’s crucial to note is that it is human presence, ultimately, that imbues interiors such as these with aura and sentimentality.

Ceramics function similarly: though, at the start of their history they were typically rather plain and functional objects, by the Neolithic period human hands had transformed clay into ritual vessels and touching depictions of the human form— into objects imbued with meaning.

The work on view here, furniture, functional wares, mixed media works, antique rugs, and sculptures alike, are fine examples of this. Mayer’s functional ceramics in particular, which dispense tape and store office supplies with a sense of whimsy, are as much tools as they are sculptures, dreamy combinations of work for work’s sake and art for art’s sake. Her furniture, meanwhile, eschews the idea of work and evokes the image of a body at rest.





Mayer's conceptually rigorous and physically robust practice in sculpture, video, and performance primarily explores how our interactions with the digital world affects our lives, bodies, and identities by shifting and shaping our perceptions and compulsions— yet, hers is a practice that scales from the most complex to the most simple of technologies. In *Office Culture*, she addresses the reality of the material works, “modeling,” in her own words, “how to subvert capital-driven modes of technological innovation.”

The oldest clay pieces shown here are post-war German works by members of the London Group, most notably Beate Kuhn (whose solo retrospective, “Turn,” goes on view at the Carnegie Pittsburgh June 29th). The most recent are works by contemporary sculptors, Aneta Regel, Gareth Mason, Nick Weddell, Anne Marie Laureys, Morten Løbner Espersen, Kim Simonsson, Chase Travaille, and the aforementioned Jillian Mayer. And while the contemporary works embody a twenty-first century sense of buoyant exuberance, the older pieces on view convey the sort of restraint we've come to see as characteristic of much Cold War-era design.

USM's Desk, with Mayer's seating placed before it, carry the scene— both are slightly surreal yet highly legible objects whose plain functions act as a refrain: they say, “Be present, have a look, and take a seat.”

That is the leitmotif. All objects herein invariably relate to the human body and call for a human presence. The desk is a display to peer into and, at once, a workspace at which to sit down to write. The shelves ask you to peek though, to walk around, and to look. At once, along the wall hang Mayer's glass works, bright and fantastic faces that return the viewer's gaze as they hover quixotically amidst her unconventional mixed media works like thoughts in progress. Below them stand examples of primarily twenty-first century ceramic sculpture, works that exemplify the ways in which a ‘functional’ medium may be transformed into pure expression. Formally speaking, like the desk and shelves and seating the pots also relate to the body: after all, ceramic vessels typically have ‘lips,’ ‘feet,’ ‘shoulders’ and ‘necks.’

Sculpture and modular furniture each demonstrate that repetition and refinement of a gesture may yield something beautiful. The confluence of hyper-functionality and sculptural, imaginative whimsy within *Office Culture: Bodies of Work / Bodies of Thought* points back again to the main line of inquiry: how do our thoughts shape interior spaces and built environments— and how do they, in turn, shape our thoughts?

So, we shimmy away from ‘the real’ and get a footing on ‘the possible,’ and in leaving reality behind embrace the unexpected.



This exhibition is curated by Grace Nkem.







Jillian Mayer
Office Organizer
2024

20 x 30 x 3 in

Bronze plated, silver plated, glazes, resins, ceramic, hardware, and office supplies
\$ 7000





Jillian Mayer
Marker Holder
2024

15 x 18 x 4 in

Bronze plate, copper plate, ceramics, glazes, resins, and office supplies

\$ 6000





Jillian Mayer

Office Supply Holder

2024

Bronze & silver plate, glazes, resins, ceramic, hardware, and office supplies

20 x 20 x 2 inches

\$ 6000





Tape Dispenser

2024

22x18x2 in

Bronze & silver plate, glazes, resins, ceramic, hardware, and office supplies

\$ 6000





Jillian Mayer
Monks fabric, ink, acrylic, yarn
82 x 44 inches
\$ 20,000



Jillian Mayer
Clumpie 011
2024
Marbled ceramic
10 x 14.5 x 10 in
\$ 3500



Jillian Mayer
Clumpie 010
2024
Marbled ceramic
10.5 x 12 x 11.5
\$ 3500



Jillian Mayer
Medium Slumpie (model/prototype)
2024
Glazed Ceramic
\$ 6000



Jillian Mayer
Medium Slumpie (model/prototype)
2024
Glazed Ceramic
\$ 6000



Jillian Mayer
Vessel 1: Supplies Holder
2024
Bronze plate, Tiffany patina, ceramic
\$ 4000



Jillian Mayer
Vessel 2: Scissor Holder
2024
Bronze plate, Tiffany patina, ceramic
\$ 4000



Jillian Mayer
Small Slumpie Model (book-end)
2024
Bronze plate, Tiffany patina, ceramic
\$ 3000



Jillian Mayer
Small Slumpie Model (book-end)
2024
Bronze plate, Tiffany patina, ceramic
\$ 3000



Jillian Mayer
Lounge Chair
Epoxy clay, resin, fiberglass, enamel, pigments
\$ 10,000



Jillian Mayer
Chaise Lounge
Epoxy clay, resin, fiberglass, enamel, pigments
\$ 12,000





Jillian Mayer
2022
Steel, cast glass
\$ 4500





Jillian Mayer
2022
Steel, cast glass
\$ 6000





Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 168
2024
Fused glass
9 x 8 in
22.86 x 20.32 cm
\$ 800



Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 167
2024
Fused glass
7 x 8 in
18 x 20.32 cm
\$ 800



Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 171
2024
Fused glass
7 x 9.5 in
18 x 24.13 cm
\$ 800





Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 163
2024
Fused glass
9 x 12 in
22.86 x 30.48 cm
\$ 800



Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 150
2024
Fused glass
\$ 500



Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 161
2024
Fused glass
9 x 10 in
22.86 x 24.4 cm
\$ 800





Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 123
2024
Fused glass
5.5 x 8.5 in
13.97 x 21.59 cm
\$ 800

Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 157
2024
Fused glass
6 x 7.5 in
15 x 19 cm
\$ 500



Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 156
2024
Fused glass
8 x 10 in
20.32 x 25.4 cm
\$ 800





Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 76
2023
Fused glass
8 x 9 in
20.32 x 22.86 cm
\$ 800



Some Jerks I Know from the Internet 172
2024
Fused glass
11 x 11 in
28 x 28 cm
\$800





Jillian Mayer

Flowers

Glass

Variable dimensions

\$ 300 per piece, \$ 1200 as a set



**JILLIAN MAYER
(b. 1986, MIAMI
FL) IS AN
ARTIST AND
FILMMAKER.**



Through, videos, sculptures, online experiences, photography, performances, and installations, Mayer explores how technology affects our lives, bodies, and identities by processing how our physical world and bodies are impacted and reshaped by our participation in a digital landscape. Mayer investigates the points of tension between our online and physical worlds and makes work that attempts to inhabit the increasingly porous boundary between the two. Mayer's artwork has a consistent thread of modeling how to subvert capital-driven modes of technological innovation.

Solo exhibitions include Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, Omaha, Nebraska (2019), Kunst Aarhus, Aarhus, Denmark (2019), University of Buffalo Art Museum, Buffalo NY (2018), Tufts University, Boston, MA (2018); Postmasters Gallery, New York, NY (2018); Pérez Art Museum, Miami, FL (2016); LAXART, Los Angeles, CA (2016); Utah Museum of Fine Art, Salt Lake City, UT (2014); and David Castillo Gallery, Miami, FL (2011 & 2016). She has exhibited, screened films, and performed at MoMA PS1 (2017); MoMA (2013); the Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, FL (2013); the Bass Museum of Art, North Miami, FL (2012); the Guggenheim Museum (2010); and the Musée d'Art Contemporain de Montréal, Québec as a part of the Montréal Biennial (2014). Mayer's work has been featured in Artforum, Art Papers, Art in America, ArtNews, The Huffington Post, and The New York Times. Mayer is a recipient of the Creative Capital Fellowship, South Florida Cultural Consortium Visual/Media Artists Fellowship, Cintas Foundation Fellowship for Cuban Artists, and was named one of the "25 New Faces of Independent Film" by Filmmaker Magazine.

She has lectured at The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, CalArts, the Sundance Institute, ICA Miami, Carnegie Mellon University, Otis College of Art & Design, Tufts University, Salt Lake Museum of Art, University of Nebraska, University of Texas Arlington, McCord Museum, the Bemis Center for Contemporary Arts, SXSW, Portland State University, Museum of Fine Arts St. Pete, Pitzer University, MoCA North Miami and more. Mayer's films have screened at festivals including Sundance, SXSW, Rottenberg Film Fest, and the New York Film Festival. She is a fellow of the Sundance Institute's New Frontiers Lab and New Narratives on Climate Change Lab.

Mayer has a new sculpture from her Slumpies series on view at MASS MoCA opening in Spring 2025.

Jason Jacques Gallery is an American contemporary art gallery specializing in artists working in clay. Over its thirty year history, the gallery has both made its mark building museum collections of late 19th century European Art Pottery and become renowned for exhibiting some of the most exciting and influential international contemporary ceramic artists.

Jason began his career in Europe three decades ago, combing through flea markets and antique shops for star pieces to send back to American dealers. He returned with a specialty in what he calls the Art Pottery Renaissance of the late-19th century — works by Lucien Lévy-Dhurmer, Ernest Chaplet, Clément Massier, Georges Hoentschel, and the like.

After an explosive work by Gareth Mason caught his eye in 2010, he launched a program in contemporary ceramics, the prime focus of the gallery today. By placing Kim Simonsson's vivid, mossy figures, Katsuyo Aoki's porcelain masterworks, and Beth Cavener's animalistic sculptures alongside the Japonist creations of Paul Jeanneney or the biomorphic inventions of Beate Kuhn, the gallery lends historical context to the contemporary talent on their roster.

Jason and his team now not only maintain a rigorous contemporary program, but work to foster new talent. The gallery's mission is bolstered by careful attention to the history of ceramics and commitment to maintaining an ongoing dialogue with the medium's rich past.

The gallery is currently operating online — for inquiries and artwork availability, please reach out to: grace@jasonjacques.com





The exhibition is on view June 13 - July 26, 2024

USM Soho | 28-30 Greene St, New York, NY 10013

Monday - Friday 10 - 6

Saturday 12 - 6

For pricing & availability, please reach out to grace@jasonjacques.com

For general inquiries, please reach out to info@jasonjacques.com

+1 646 321 3999

@jasonjacquesgallery

@jillianmayer

@usmmodularfurniture



Refreshments kindly provided by:

TWO
ROBBERS
SPIRITS COMPANY

The reception will feature a live DJ set by Natalie Soler a.k.a.

SOLER SYSTEM

