



Young Joon Kwak, *Hermaphroditus's Reveal I*, 2017, fiberglass cloth, resin, cast resin, gold enamel, 42 x 28 x 33".

LOS ANGELES

“All Hands on Deck”

BEN MALTZ GALLERY, OTIS COLLEGE OF
ART AND DESIGN

9045 Lincoln Boulevard

January 21 - April 22

In her 1994 book *The Body in Pieces: The Fragment as a Metaphor of Modernity*, the late art historian [Linda Nochlin](#) analogized representations of the disintegrated figure to tumultuous moments in the modern period's political and metaphysical flux. While she linked some examples to the era's chaotic break from antique notions of unification and permanence, Nochlin argued that others gestured to literal experiences of violence by communities under assault. The logic of the rich array of works in this exhibition bears resemblance to Nochlin's own in how it addresses social regulation of bodies in the globalized present.

[Young Joon Kwak](#) has titled *Hermaphroditus's Reveal I*, 2017, after the mythological child of Aphrodite and Hermes, often portrayed in Greco-Roman sculpture as a feminine figure with male genitalia. Through its coyly placed hands and arabesque ripples of resin-coated fiberglass cloth, the work conjures an abstraction of the act of revealing. Echoes of this maneuver are found in [Ellen Schafer's](#) “Ambiance Apparel,” 2017, a series of silicone-painted totemic T-shirt sculptures; [Isabel Yellin's](#) bulging leatherette-covered human surrogates; and [Paul Mpagi Sepuya's](#) aptly titled photographs (such as *Draping [IMG6936]* and *Draping [R2A7774]*, both 2015), all of which render yet simultaneously foreclose the erotic potential of perceiving skin among undulating folds and puckers of fabric. Alternatively, in [Orr Herz](#) and [Roni Shneior's](#) ceramic and epoxy fountain, *Finish the Words from Your Plate*, 2015, abject pleasures flow amid the orifices of an exuberantly splayed cavity, the lip of which is accented by gangly fingers.

Evocative thematic and historic resonances abound in this installation, which underscores the resistive potential of figuration in interstitial forms. Between the works' various states of visibility, illegibility, fracture, and unity, new corporeal orientations emerge.

— [Jeanne Dreskin](#)