

# VENUS

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Los Angeles Times

## Review Dan McCarthy's 'Facepots': The smiles never end in this L.A. world

By Sharon Mizota  
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Dan McCarthy's "Facepots" on view at Venus Over Los Angeles. (Dan McCarthy / Venus Over Los Angeles)

Dan McCarthy's ceramic "Facepots" are wonderfully goofy. Arrayed on pedestals around the main gallery at Venus Over Los Angeles, they are larger-than-life vessels of fun.

Lumpy and organic, shaped a bit like kelp bulbs, they are mostly adorned with simple, grinning faces made from chunks of clay. A few have rounded mouths and a look of mild surprise, not unlike the doughy Mr. Bill.

In terms of color, McCarthy favors rainbow washes and bright solids, although a few of the pots nod toward more traditional mottled glazes, in particular a deep, emerald green highlighted with touches of gold luster.

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The logo for the Los Angeles Times, featuring the words "Los Angeles Times" in a white, classic serif font, centered within a solid black rectangular background.

The pots express a childlike wonder and sense of play; they are exuberantly confident and somewhat psychedelic.

This latter impression is supported by a group of shaped-canvas paintings in the next room. Strewn across the wall are breezy rainbows, clouds and lightning bolts: pop culture motifs endemic to 1970s Southern California.

With the addition of speech bubbles with dates and place names, as well as phrases like “Stoned again” and “PiL” (the band), they form a rough autobiography from McCarthy’s 1962 birth in Hawaii and his youth in Huntington Beach.

He now lives in Brooklyn, so perhaps this display is a bit of nostalgia. It’s certainly a view of SoCal life without a dark side: a nice fantasy.