

Berardini, Andrew. "A last love letter from a sunseting civilization." *ArtSlant* (February 24, 2013) [ill.] [online]



*Floating Heads and Time Collector*

JJ PEET

Redling Fine Art

6757 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90038

January 11, 2013 - February 23, 2013

**A last love letter from a sunseting civilization**

*by Andrew Berardini*

There's hope this might be seen, yet a humbling acceptance of the vast loneliness of space.

It is a gesture.

A last love letter from a sunseting civilization, a temple left on an abandoned planet, a spare record jettisoned into the cosmos whispering its enigmas through these worn remnants.

Do words fail? Maybe. So do civilizations. After a people's peak troughs, do objects reclaim their lost souls? The first and last humans doubtlessly were and will be animists. I wish we had a verb for once was and will likely be again but definitely isn't now. Past-future perfect simultaneous. This language has not yet caught up to the all-over and at-once of real time, the collapsed moment where these objects find themselves.

Coming in out of the sun, a rush of spooky darkness subsides into hallowed half-light, shrouded and ethereal. In the corner, a flickering screen jangles through images. Shot by shot by shot, objects accumulate, pile into knitted sheaths, jutting and fretting through jittery dances. The curious qualities of things take on shuddering life, even here light bends and folds. Every moment accumulated, layered one on top of the other. Year by year, its history lengthens snap by snap, a document of itself. In another corner, bolted to the ceiling dangle a trio of floating heads into this

little sanctified bunker. Maybe they're just hanging out, waiting around for the start of a Beckett play, a sequel to Endgame.



**JJ PEET**, *Floating Head\_4 (aka Guts)*, 2013, Porcelain, terra cotta, mild steel, black plastic bag, cotton and aluminum, 73 x 10 x 10 inches; Courtesy of the Artist and Redling Fine Art.

Their language is not readily decipherable. Uneasy words drop away and only these totems, culled from mild steel and elemental detritus, linger on. Part of the language is objects, for sure. Part of the language is gravity perhaps too, things here both droop down and stretch against. Their weight has its own weft and warp of threaded meaning. The black plastic bag droops, pendulously. Thin metal rods extend like limbs, outward. Maligner too long around them and this reliquary shifts gently into ossuary, each of these floaters taking on their own weird, funereal personality. Part of the language here is also maybe light. Moodily lit rods become bones when brushed with just the right amount of shadow.

The materials, analyzed and listed out, sound their own cryptic poem: porcelain, paper, correction fluid, pine, human hair, black plastic bag, sterling silver, gum, black nylon, cotton. Are they junky? Yes they are kind of junky. But so insistently purposeful, so carefully arranged, balanced and poised, there must be a mysterious intelligence at work, someone who composed these curious and compelling talismans in mute ritual.

(Image on top: **JJ PEET**, *Floating Head\_2 (aka Old Lady)* , 2013, Porcelain, mild steel, pine, plastic, paper, lime, gum and aluminum, 63 x 16 x 11 inches; Courtesy of the Artist and Redling Fine Art.)