Artist Statement
Wesley Harvey

My current body of artwork examines different facets of gay male sexuality and homoeroticism through the lens of queer theory using appropriation of imagery and objects. I want to address and question what it means to be gay, queer, and cisgender not only for my own sexuality, but for those around me too, both stranger and acquaintance. I want to examine not only the normative behavior but also the deviant lifestyle, past and present, that often gets neglected and chastised. With previous artwork, I was examining my surroundings and personal encounters as the influence for the start of the collage process. Recently, I have put myself aside as the starting point and have begun looking at other encounters and relationships in a voyeuristic way, using personal ads posted on dating/sex websites, mobile dating/sex applications, and even chat rooms. In this online and instant realm, I can find both the normative and the deviant behaviors that interest me to create the narratives that often begin as works on paper and transition to ceramics, ranging from functional artwork to vessels and sculpture.

The Baroque and Rococo periods provide a great source of inspiration for me. The use of gold and floral designs in excess gives me a visual overload of imagery and objects that deeply satisfy my tawdry desires. Ancient Greek and Roman pottery are an endless source for my starting point when working with ceramics. Kitsch and popular culture let me appropriate an endless supply of imagery that teeters from the extreme tacky to the candy-coated sickness that lies in the heart of both kitsch and popular culture. Drag queens share my love of gold, glitter, and excessive prettiness that I adore. Illustrations from 1960's male physique magazines allow me to appropriate a fantasy male subject who is handsome and extremely physically fit, that interacts with other men in encounters that ride a line between caring and loving to deviant sexual acts that can be sometimes hard to look at.