

ART


# An Artist Asked Her Community for Yonic Imagery. The Result Is on View at Hauser & Wirth

Jennifer Rochlin's new show "Paintings on Clay" melds intimate and communal narratives on terracotta canvases, featuring her standout piece *Honey Pot*—a collaborative celebration of femininity.

**Katie White**

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Artwork by Jennifer Rochlin. Photography by Maya Fuhr. All images courtesy of the artist and Hauser & Wirth.

Jennifer Rochlin doesn't shy away from intimate details—in conversation or in art. Her lovers, past and present, make frequent appearances on the painted surfaces of her undulating ceramic vessels. “Someone asked me if I was the Taylor Swift of the art world because of the boyfriend references,” Rochlin laughs wryly over the phone from her Los Angeles studio. “Maybe I am. That's fine with me.”

This spring, Rochlin's works are taking an even more sybaritic turn. “Paintings on Clay,” Rochlin's first solo exhibition with Hauser & Wirth, which opens tomorrow in New York, brings together recent canvases and large-scale hand-built terracotta vessels. On these surfaces, Rochlin paints glimpses of her kids, friends, and lovers interspersed with vegetal bounty. Spooling tendrils of plants and lush, heady blossoms abound. The imagery is alternately dreamy, longing, raw, and tender.



Artwork by Jennifer Rochlin. Photography by Keith Lubow.

Though best known for her ceramics today, Rochlin's turn to three-dimensions came through unexpected circumstances. Sixteen years ago, she had just taken a job as an art teacher at an all-girls school in Los Angeles, when during her first week, the school received a grant to start a ceramics program. Diving in headlong, Rochlin began taking classes at a local ceramics studio and sharing her knowledge with her students. “I was learning alongside them,” she said (one of the students in her first class is now her assistant).

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Collective intimacy is fundamental to Rochlin's practice today. Consider the star of the Hauser & Wirth show, the collaborative work *Honey Pot*, 2024. It bears the marks of 22 artists in LA's creative community, each of whom was invited to provide her own interpretation of the vagina. In its current form, *Honey Pot* includes contributions from Hilary Pecis, Jen Guidi, and Blair Saxon-Hill, among others.



Jennifer Rochlin, *Honey Pot*, 2024. Photography by Keith Lubow.

The work is playful, immediate, and almost tattoo-like in its physicality. Some artists incised their visions while visiting Rochlin's studio; others sent drawings that Rochlin's assistant translated onto the vase. Interpretations ranged from the anatomical to the anthropomorphic. Pecis's vision dons panties, while Karin Gulbran has transformed hers into a butterfly.

Rochlin even took *Honey Pot* on the road for impromptu adornments. When the vessel was leather-hard ("hard enough to touch, soft enough to scratch"), she drove it to her friend [Evan Holloway's opening at David Kordansky](#). "I had my friend illegally park the car in this driveway next door to the gallery," she recalls. "I would run in and try to grab artists that I know and love, saying, 'Hey, will you come draw a vagina on my vase?' People would say 'Oh, okay'—but there's no planning time and it's a little bit hard to draw a vagina."



Caitlin Lonagan making the first mark on *Honey Pot*.

This is far from the first time members of Rochlin's community have been invited into her practice. Inspired by a partner who wanted Rochlin to bite a “constellation” of teeth marks onto his body, the artist began inviting friends to leave their toothy impressions on her ceramics. She has found the loss of control liberating.

“At Evan’s opening, the artist Kim Fisher bore a hole through the *Honey Pot* while I was running around. She said it was like the pot was giving birth,” Rochlin says. “I came back and thought, *Oh, that’s a bold move, but all right, I’ll take it.*”

*Honey Pot* is a follow-up to Rochlin’s *Cock Pot*, 2023, a ceramic vessel she made in honor of artist, socialite, and Warhol sidekick Brigid Berlin for the exhibition “The Heaviest,” curated by Alison M. Gingeras at Vito Schnabel last year. Artists including Mark Grotjahn, Delia Brown, and Louise Bonnet covered the vase with penises—an homage to Berlin’s infamous *Cock Book*, an art book in which Berlin collected phallic scrawls from Jean-Michel Basquiat, Robert Rauschenberg, and others.



Artwork by Jennifer Rochlin. Photography by Keith Lubow.

For *Honey Pot*, Rochlin focused exclusively on women artists' interpretations. "We've seen enough male drawings of vaginas in art history," she says. "I wanted this to be a celebration of women artists and women drawing ourselves."

Rochlin wants to keep that celebration of women going through the election cycle. She says she'll be contributing her share of the proceeds from the sale of *Honey Pot* to Walk the Walk, a nonprofit focused on voter empowerment.

And as for Rochlin's contribution to the vase? "I ended up painting some poppies on it," she says. "Now, I just call it *Pussies and Poppies*."

*"Paintings on Clay"* will be on view from May 2 through July 12, 2024 at Hauser & Wirth's 22nd Street New York location.