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ART IN REVIEW
‘EVERYTHING MUST GO’

By Holland Cotter

Casey Kaplan 525 West 21st Street, Chelsea Through July 29



There’s nothing not to like, at least a little, in this big, saucy group show of new collectibles from the Cerámica Suro in Guadalajara, Mexico. In 1993 the factory’s owner, José Noé Suro, an art collector, began inviting local and international artists to produce limited-edition multiples in ceramic and other media. The show, organized by Mr. Suro and the Los Angeles artist Eduardo Sarabia, is a job-lot-style display of current inventory, almost all of it for sale, and fairly cheap.

For example, \$500, give or take some change, will buy you a pair of ceramic skateboards by Adrián S. Bará, or three fruit-colored, stool-like sculptures by Cecilia León de la Barra, or a string of milagros-like charms (leg, arm, tongue, ear and tooth) by Renata Morales, or two giant ceramic French fries by Ester Partegàs, or a miniature metal bomb with plastic pop-out flowers by Pentti Monkkonen, or a ceramic version of a vinyl record album by Matthew Higgs.

The names give some idea of the Cerámica Suro program’s geographic mix. Mr. Bará and Ms. León de la Barra live and work in Mexico. Ms. Morales is from Montreal, Mr. Monkkonen from Los Angeles. Ms. Partegàs was born in Spain but is now in New York. Mr. Higgs, originally from London, is the director of the nonprofit White Columns gallery in Manhattan and an ardent art party D.J. Several other participants are Chelsea fixtures as members of the Kaplan gallery stable. Notable among these is Nathan Carter, who collaborates on some whimsical jewelry with the designer Samantha Treacy, who is married to Casey Kaplan, the gallery owner.

My mildly avid shopper’s eye — I see collectibles, I think clutter — was pulled to a few other items: Annika Von Hausswolff’s wicked little bronze baby-teethers; tomato-shaped lamps by Jorge Pardo; Michelle Elzay’s elegant suite of severed arms; the exceptionally roomy cotton T-shirts designed by Clayton Evans under the name complexgeometries; and a small black Day-

of the Dead head by an artist duo who call themselves Homeless (Cristian Franco Martín and Luis Felipe Man- zano).

The rest of what's here, cute to bland, gains what interest it has from the peppy installation, though Garth Weiser's full- scale, two-toned (black and orange), nonfunctional (I think) ceramic toilet does stand out, and at \$750 is surely some kind of bargain. The take-away impression is that the Cerámica Suro artists all had fun doing what they did, which is also the impression made by a lot of New York art now. In the long run, that's not nearly enough, but in a steamy midsummer city, it'll do.