

## BORTOLAMI



### ***Eric Wesley / St. Louis***

May 2016 - May 2017

1296 Camp Jackson Road, Cahokia, IL

Thursday-Saturday, 12-5 pm and by appointment

Bortolami is pleased to announce the latest phase of *Eric Wesley/St. Louis*, or “The Bell,” an accumulative yearlong project by Eric Wesley in a former Taco Bell in Cahokia, IL. This project began with the renovation of the main exhibition space and the presentation of a suite of tondo paintings based on the cross-section of a burrito. In the second phase of The Bell, Wesley debuted two new sculptures: facsimiles of the postmodern corner windows of the Pizza Hut across the street, as well as an installation of a snaking HVAC duct emerging from the ceiling. In October, Wesley cultivated a corn maze in front of the building, and created an installation with a crow, *Heseus*.

For the latest phase of this project, Wesley has installed a suite of works that debuted at Midway Contemporary Art, Minneapolis in September in an exhibition called *ISOSCELES, TRAPEZOID, ARCH*. These new works include arched and trapezoidal planes of colored, mirrored glass that correspond to the shapes of the windows in the The Bell and the Pizza Hut across the street, respectively. Bronze cast scale models of these buildings hang suspended above glass tables in the back room, threatening to fracture the relationship between the interior and exterior.

Many of Wesley’s works in this project express a preoccupation with this inner/outer dichotomy. The aluminum frames of the Burrito Paintings, for example, form a “skin” around the burrito itself, and Wesley paints the exposed contents of the burrito like a biological diagram, a map of a hidden interior. The window sculptures take what is outside—namely an architectural feature of the Pizza Hut—and bring it into The Bell. The HVAC sculpture produces a heat exchange with the outside air, like a human respiratory system. The Bell, as it develops, begins to function like an organism, drawing connections to the human body and evoking questions of conceptual and physical permeability.

The latest phase of this yearlong exhibition furthers this binary relationship between The Bell and Pizza Hut that exist on opposite sides of Camp Jackson Road, creating a formal and spatial tension between them. Wesley seems to posit that ultimately the difference between what is outside and what is inside might be a construct, after all.

Eric Wesley (b. 1973, Los Angeles) lives and works in Los Angeles, and received his BA from University of California Los Angeles. Wesley currently the subject of a solo exhibition at Midway Contemporary Art in Minneapolis, and is participating in the Artists for Frescobaldi 2016, the winner of which will be announced imminently. He has had solo exhibitions in galleries internationally as well as MOCA, Los Angeles and Foundation Morra Greco, Naples, Italy, and 356 Mission Road in Los Angeles. Among others, Wesley’s work has been included in exhibitions at the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Musée d’Art Contemporain, Bordeaux; Fundación/ Colección, Jumex, Mexico; Museo d’Arte, Benevento, Italy; the 2004 Whitney Biennial; The Prague Biennial; Institute of Contemporary Art, London; MoMA P.S.1, New York; and the Studio Museum in Harlem. He is one of the founders of Los Angeles’ Mountain School of Arts.

*Artist/City* is an experimental programming initiative for which artists mount yearlong projects in alternative exhibition spaces across the country. For more information on current *Artist/City* projects please visit [bortolamigallery.com/artistcity](http://bortolamigallery.com/artistcity). For information and images, please contact Emma Fernberger at +1-212-727-2050 or [emma@bortolamigallery.com](mailto:emma@bortolamigallery.com)