

## CRITICS' PICKS

View of "Summer Wheat and Hirosuke Yabe," 2019.  
DETROIT

### Summer Wheat and Hirosuke Yabe

WASSERMAN PROJECTS  
3434 Russell Street #502  
September 27–December 21, 2019

Summer Wheat's *Cookie Coin*, 2019, depicts a crudely rendered womanly figure lounging on her stomach and munching on a large coin, which crumbles into smaller change that falls to the floor. The central disk is emblazoned with another rough feminine figure, suggesting a matrilineal homage. Nearby is *Coin Cart*, another new acrylic painting on wire mesh, arduously constructed, regimented but organic, with Wheat's signature balance of Day-Glo colors. On the floor of the gallery rest three inorganic fiberglass forms covered in a mosaic of natural and man-made stones. The inset designs picture more approximate figures—humans, snakes, and others—that may have slipped off a Grecian urn and are now on their way to a mid-2000s Risograph comic book. History is being rewritten, and Wheat has granted women and their economic concerns a central role.

Hirosuke Yabe's two modest room-size constructions and various small sculpted emissaries command the largest room of the gallery. The semi-enclosed spaces feel both domestic and sacral. They were built using cast-offs from local abandoned lots and salvage yards; the nonchalance of the final structures belies their meticulous assembly. Natabori, the traditional wood-hatching method Yabe employs to create his environments, also gives his solitary wood figures (some humanoid, others canine) a wizened look; their unvarnished surfaces are marred by the tool of their maker. These statuary preside over the room from wall shelves and corners of the larger structures, sharing a vocabulary of raw tactility with Wheat's contributions.

Though neither artist lives in Detroit, both responded to the site for this show. Wheat arranged from afar the fabrication of a row of gleaming piggy banks, which speak to the city's post-bankruptcy revitalization. Yabe worked on his installations while in residence for a month, responding to the empty housing stock and perpetual reconstruction. Both artists' works ambiguously anticipate the influx of resources that has become Detroit's rallying cry.