

CULTURED
MAGAZINE

SCALING DOWN

With quarantine restrictions in place in Los Angeles, artist Ruby Neri turns her attention to the bigger picture: days with her daughter and a slow, steady pace.

PORTRAIT BY ELON SCHOENHOLZ



“DURING THIS PERIOD, I’VE BEEN spending time with my eleven-year-old daughter, Sigrid—who has online school during the week—and my dog, Lucy, at our home in Altadena, California. I have been gardening quite a bit, making work on my back porch and catching up on trades with other artists. I’ve also been making lots of drawings, experimenting with new gestures and color palettes for more expressive figures.

As for my sculptural work, I usually produce large vessels in a big gas kiln, but I don’t have access to it right now. I’ve gotten into a pattern of making work at home and transporting it to my studio in Frogtown, where I can use a small electric kiln that fires pieces up to twenty-seven inches. So, I’ve taken a break from larger pieces—which require a lot of physical labor—to produce on a smaller scale instead. This is a good time to experiment with glaze testing, which I’ve wanted to do for a while. I’m giving myself space to stop and explore different ways of working, focusing more on sculptural pieces than my typical vessels, hoping it will inspire the objects I make after this period of staying at home and distancing.

I feel that making work—and especially having contact with the team at David Kordansky Gallery—is what makes me feel ‘normal’ and stable, so I don’t mind talking about work and work production right now. If anything I’m very aware of how much of an ‘animal’ I am; how much I need connection to what was my everyday life—to that consistency—to make the world feel right. During this uncertain time, if I don’t have contact with why I make art, the act—in some regards—becomes absurd.”

—Ruby Neri

Ruby Neri in her Los Angeles studio.