

**CLIFTON BENEVENTO**

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# cura.

## Petroleum Jelly

By Polly Apfelbaum, John Burtle, Kirsten Nash, David Zuttermeister



*Petroleum Jelly* is the title of the new group show at Clifton Benevento, New York. The exhibition gathers together ceramics, paintings and sculptures by four American artists, Polly Apfelbaum, John Burtle, Kirsten Nash and David Zuttermeister. The title refers to the use of petroleum jelly in photography in order to get a soft focus effect: by spreading this substance on the lens, the photographic subject turns into a dreamlike and visionary representation. The works on display in the gallery, even though not produced with lens-based media, feature an analog “petroleum jelly” effect: the artists here employ various materials and methods to blur, soften and re-imagine subjects. Some objects appear amorphous, while others have been molded in loose representational forms. Purposefully imperfect, the pieces on view appear fragile yet somehow alive. Among the works on show are John Burtle’s *Little hairy cactus* (2013-2014), a cactus-like sculpture made of painted hair, and David Zuttermeister’s series of *Untitled (Animal magnet, 2012)*, produced with foam, fabric, resin, fiberglass and steel.

Petroleum Jelly by Polly Apfelbaum, John Burtle, Kirsten Nash, David Zuttermeister Clifton Benevento, New York Through April 12