

On Vessels

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“De·per·son·al·i·za·tion: /dē,pərsənələ'zāSH(ə)n/, noun, a state in which one's thoughts and feelings seem unreal or not to belong to oneself, or in which one loses all sense of identity” (Google Dictionary, n.d.). “De·re·al·i·za·tion | \ (,)dē-,rē-ə-lə-'zā-shən \ noun, a feeling of altered reality (such as that occurring in schizophrenia or some drug reactions) in which one's surroundings appear unreal or unfamiliar” (Merriam Webster). Josh Dorman's collection 'how strange it is to be anything at all' is full of vivid flashes of dream-like images with the essence of a raw and unfiltered stream of thought. In every piece of this collection, the viewer gets an insider view into the artist's mind. All of the pieces have collages of images with mixed media, high contrast colors, and bizarre visions that seem less and less grounded, taking the viewer on a journey with no gravity, floating in a strange abyss.

Vessels are no different, just the naming of “Vessels” changes the experience and guides it on the track of Josh Dorman's desire. The main subject of the piece is a pale, bald, head and shoulders wading through a liquid with no face, in front of a dark background with inconsistent lighting that reinforces the feeling of variance and chaos. Two symptoms of depersonalization are “emotional or physical numbness of your senses or responses to the world around you” and “a sense that your memories lack emotion, and that they may or may not be your own memories” (Mayo Clinic). Around the head, in Vessels, there are many wild things with varying levels of detail that seem to drift, as if untethered to the world around them. A green animal with a yellow flower for a head, plants, and pottery with tentacles, a bright beach ball, this wispy vision is erratic and boundless. The ripples in the liquid around the head express movement, as if the head was moving to walk on the blue cliffs of green lands. The oddities are staring at the head facelessly, watching its every move. Are they gazing with concern or waiting for the head to make a mistake? Are they friends or capturers? Or are they trapped too, carved out of their

'value' and left with a starless sky, with only each other in this desolate universe?

Does the axolotl in the corner feel scared knowing that it's the only thing from our world, or has it already been forgotten? Or maybe this is our world after the chaos had won, how strange that would be. How strange it is to be anything at all.