



## KEVIN KAO

Born and raised in California, Kevin Kao is a sculptor that explores the construction of collective identity through figure, reflection, and multiplicity. His work has been exhibited internationally in galleries and spaces such as The Crocker Art Museum in Sacramento, CA; Atlanta Contemporary in Atlanta, GA; and the Kranzberg Arts Center in St. Louis, MO. Recent awards include recognition as a 2021 finalist in the Young Sculptors Competition at Miami University, the Artist Support Grant from the Regional Arts Commission in St. Louis, and the Warren MacKenzie Advancement Grant presented by the Northern Clay Center in Minneapolis. He has earned a B.S. in Biology – Ecology, Evolution and Animal Behavior from the University of California, San Diego; and an M.F.A. in Studio Art – Ceramics from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Currently Kao lives and works in Greenville, SC serving as Associate Professor of Art at Furman University.

## RELATED PROGRAMMING

FIRST FRIDAY \_\_\_\_\_ April 4, May 2, 6–10pm

ARTS ON THE BLOCK \_\_\_\_\_ April 26, 11am–5pm

ARTIST TALK \_\_\_\_\_ June 1, 2pm

Cover: Kevin Kao, *Serving Coaster 2*

**artspace** 201 E Davie St. Raleigh, NC • [artspacenc.org](http://artspacenc.org)

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# SHAPE, SHAPE, SERVE



**KEVIN KAO**

**APRIL 4–JUNE 1, 2025**



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## ARTIST STATEMENT

*Shape, Shape, Serve* consists of two works by artist, Kevin Kao, who assembles groups of ceramic sculptures into large installations that explore systems of comprehension, theatre, and the collection. These themes act as metaphors for the Asian American experience, particularly the process of assimilation, drawing from the artists' experience growing up as a third-culture kid—caught between multiple cultural influences and identities.

Both artworks in the exhibition—*Serving Coasters* and *Buns*—incorporate over 50 individual ceramic objects, each crafted to reference bodily forms of hair, limb, flesh, crevice, and bone. These fragments are shaped, assembled, and recombined to reveal playful suggestions that reconsider utility, an inherent quality associated with ceramics.

At the core of the exhibition are the multiple interpretations of *servicing*. This concept is explored through many iterations: functionally as a drink coaster, generosity in providing a look, portion for consumption, fulfillment of a purpose, or an act of submission. These “servicing” objects, ask viewers to consider the roles of the body-object in presenting and navigating large social and cultural systems.



Images, l-r: Kevin Kao  
*Serving Coaster 1*; Kevin Kao,  
*Serving Coaster 9*.