James Rigler’s sculptures are inspired by the language of architectural ornament, including its most monumental and grandiose schemes. He recognises in such source material the eloquent signs and symbols that contribute to the narratives of power, the myths and identities of nations and localities. He delights in the strangeness of this ornament when viewed in close proximity and divorced from its intended context. His interpretations of it take the form of fragments of buildings - a lantern, a corbel, a segment of a wall - as well as the heads and hands of statuary. A collection of cast ceramic flags, some nearly a metre long, seem of particularly unexpected scale and substance.

He describes this new body of work ‘as being led by thoughts of ruined and abandoned ancient places, romantic landscapes and stage sets’, acknowledging Italo Calvino’s Invisible Cities as a text that has been important in shaping his ideas and in particular the fictional Marco Polo’s description of the city Clarice. This is a city that has been subject to a long history of decay and renewal to the point where its remains have become hard to decode. No-one can say with any certainty if an object may have had humble or privileged beginnings.

Rigler’s sculptures are also experienced as objects adrift in the world. They may all appear to belong to the same place, but their former order and placement has been lost. Ancient structures exist shoulder to shoulder with modernist simplicity, the traditional mixes in with the vernacular, the sacred with the profane, the real with the fake. His objects have emphatic, epic presence, but their meaning remains mysterious.

James Rigler (b. 1978) studied for a BA in Wood, Metal, Ceramics and Plastic at the University of Brighton (1999 - 2002) and for an MA in Ceramics and Glass at the Royal College of Art (2005 - 2007). Recent exhibitions include: Room Service, Pollock House and the Lighthouse, Glasgow (2012-2013); Jerwood Makers Open, Jerwood Space, London and Oriel Myrddin, Camarthen (2012); The Lost World, Marsden Woo Gallery Project Space (2011); Talking in Clay, Courtyard Gallery, Hereford (2011); Phoenix Landscapes, 77m3 Gallery, Denmark (2011). Examples of his work can be found in the collections of the Crafts Council, London and Chatsworth House, Derbyshire.

Gallery opening hours are Tuesday to Friday 11.00 - 18.00 and Saturday 11.00 - 16.00. The nearest tube stations are Barbican, Farringdon or Old Street.

For more information, images or to arrange an interview with the artist please contact Siobhan Feeney or Tatjana Marsden Telephone: +44(0)20 7336 6396
Email: press@marsdenwoo.com

Both images: work in progress in the artist’s studio © James Rigler (2012)