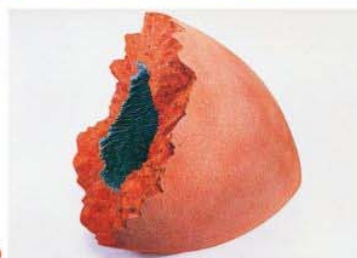
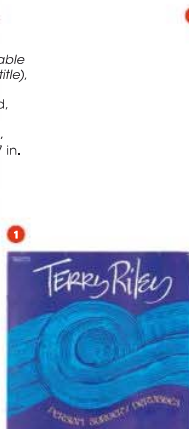




Matthew Ronay
Red Imparishable (working title), 2015. Basswood, dye, and gouache, 12 x 15 x 7 in.



INSPIRATIONS

MATTHEW RONAY

Ronay's rich sculptural assemblages conjure a dizzying number of associations; they fall somewhere between New Age occultism, Willy Wonka's *Chocolate Factory*, Memphis Group design, and Ron Nagle's tiny ceramics. The artist has new work on view at the Pérez Art Museum Miami through January 15, 2017. Here, he shares a few inspirations that have informed his personal vision.

Terry Riley, Minimalist composer American, b. 1935

Persian Surgery Dervishes, 1972, Shanti Records

"Hearing this record feels like watching a beaker of water come to a boil, cool down, and come to a boil again. Playing only a Vox Super Continental Combo organ and tape delay, Riley performs the same piece in Los Angeles and then again in Paris, with different results. Although the composition is modal, it is in no way stiff; its hypnotic and wavelike quality is in part the result of Riley's study of Eastern spiritualism. This combination of spirituality and avant-garde is completely singular, almost empirical." 1

Fernand Léger, painter French, 1881–1955

Le feuille de houx sur fond rouge, 1928

"I adore Léger's works from the beginning of the 1920s through 1930. Less figurative than later works and more concrete than earlier cubist works, they titillate the same part of me that enjoys a purely descriptive passage from a Robbe-Grillet novel. This painting especially, an outlier in his oeuvre, awes me. Maybe it's only capturing the quality of a holly tree or poinsettia leaf on one hand (amazing), but on the other, it seems to be an embodiment of Jung's "shadow," a dark unidentified area of hang-ups. On top of all this, its incredible Möbius-like sculptural quality gives me energy to contemplate its form, scale, and weight at length. What kind of atmosphere makes it float like that in a field of red? I must make sure to leave room for not knowing." 2

Ingvar Cronhammar, sculptor Swedish/Danish, b. 1947

"Although not trained as an architect, this artist's mysterious works verge on being dark science fiction-inspired tombs or interior cathedrals viewed from the outside. His constructions, mostly public by nature of their size, reside entirely in Sweden and Denmark and resemble buildings or possibly some kind of civic engineering; think of subway ventilation kiosks. The works that appeal to me most have an implied mass, as if they are housing some sort of super-matter, and have a psychological weight that reads as somehow mournful." 3

Graham Marks, ceramic sculptor American, b. 1951

"I was first exposed to Marks's work in Kentucky at the collection of Reverend Al Shands. Aroused, I made a photograph of the work and texted Matthew Drutt, whom I knew had extensive ceramic knowledge, and asked if he knew whose work it was. Not only did he identify it as being Graham Marks, but his mother, Helen, who founded one of the United States' first contemporary galleries dedicated to modern craft, Helen Drutt Gallery in Philadelphia, had represented the artist. Marks's celestial works—large ceramic sculptures, often fabricated inside out from coils, thick, sitting in repose—appear to be eggs broken in half. They also seem to be maps of the cosmos, something similar to a Bhūmandala. On another level, the sculptures function microscopically and could allude to cells, ovaries, or atoms. Marks was a pioneer in using materials other than clay in his forms, such as metal nuts and bolts, to create objects that approach a look akin to members of the vegetable kingdom broken open to reveal their genesis. Are these deep personal works contemplative and healing? After these investigations, Marks possibly found the energy and conversation around making artworks lacking. He retired in 1992 and turned toward something more socially useful: an acupuncture practice." 4

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MATTHEW RONAY AND ANDREA ROSEN GALLERY, NEW YORK; TERRY RILEY, SHANTI RECORDS; INGVAR CRONHAMMAR, PETER ROSBERG AND CREATIVE COMMONS; GRAHAM MARKS