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## Restoration

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# Restoration

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Fine Arts in the Department of Craft/Material Studies at  
Virginia Commonwealth University.

By  
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B.F.A. Illinois State University 2013  
M.F.A. Virginia Commonwealth University 2017

Major Director: Andrea Keys-Connell  
Professor, Craft/Material Studies

Virginia Commonwealth University  
Richmond, Virginia  
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To my professors and mentors who have challenged and help mold me into the person I am today, thank you.

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# Abstract

## Restoration

By Shannon Slaight-Brown, M.F.A

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in the Department of Craft/Material Studies at Virginia Commonwealth University.

Virginia Commonwealth University, 2017.  
Major Director: Andrea Keys-Connell  
Professor, Craft/Material Studies

### Abstract:

The marks I make in clay have different characteristics, and the physical mark of one's fingertips or visual record of the hand is personal and intimate. This visible activity is the evidence of my constant presence and control within each object. Its repetitive meditation produces a private relief from my persistent anxieties. This exploration for me is not only visual, but also physical. This is the start of my infatuation with the idea of pattern. It has its own discrete visual language and modes of communication; and through my research I am developing a method of intercommunication.

## Preface.

### Shannon's Manifesto:

I often ask myself, why is life so difficult? Theodore Roosevelt said, "Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, [or] difficulty..."<sup>1</sup> This has been my mantra for quite some years now, allowing myself to believe that I am fighting the good fight. While I have been battling this mantra, I have learned some things along the way.

First and foremost be kind and gentle to yourself. You are in charge of your thoughts and beliefs, don't let yourself believe you don't belong or somehow you're not as good as them. Here are some of my beliefs for myself: I am loved, I am at my happiest when I help others succeed, I have many avenues of talent not in only art, I am giving, and genuine, loyal, a peacemaker, I love to sing, and be a goof, but I am also serious, and trustworthy, reliable, I pride myself on my problem-solving abilities, I have succeeded many times, yet also failed, and I could go on and on and on but the thing which is most true about me is my ability to let my anxiousness get the best of me and I forget all those things I previously mentioned. Although, at times life can be a struggle, equally life can be fantastic. One of the most fantastic things about my life is my ability to create. I am a maker, proud and true; and I hold onto this with every breath I have.

A second bit of advice I would like to share with young artists is to make what you want, and not what you think others are asking of you. Mainly, produce your art for yourself and then figure out how to fit others into your world. I also am a people pleaser something I haven't lived with my whole life, but sort of grew into. At times this habit is amazing and helps build confidence, but in other times it's devastating. Know this, it is perfectly acceptable to say NO. You can say no to lots of things, and in doing this there is a sense of freedom and permission. The permission, to rid your mind from your nagging doubt. You know what my dream is as an artist? I want to be proud of what I do with very little threads of doubt to ruin me.

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<sup>1</sup> Roosevelt, Theodore. "American Ideals in Education." Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Reel 421, vol. 3, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress, Washington D.C. Nov. 4, 1910. Pg. 1000.



As a maker, I hold onto many nostalgic memories, which cement my beliefs in why I perform as an artist. What I love about making: the community, the failure and successes, teaching, the smell of fresh clay, the first pinch and the last one, I love the goodness in others I can see through their own creations, I yearn for acceptance and approval, and the recognition of my work without explanation, my color palette, and the stress of it all.

My third bit of advice is to proceed with courage. Being an artist is not always romantic; there will be some serious bouts of unhappiness. The choice for me was in using those struggles to pull myself from the pit and believe in what I was doing wholeheartedly. Here's what I know for sure no one can win over another by being a jerk, and genuineness, and compassion will get you further than all the money and notoriety in the world. Imagine if you could for a moment, creating artwork with your own meaning, aren't we all doing this in this building? But think about how powerful that is, and how communication can change an individual's life. Did you ever think you might change someone's life because of what you create, what a huge moment! If you can't see the magic in that, you haven't been staring long enough.

Recently I have been creating these artworks, which are about the personal relationships and circumstances I have experienced. So within those experiences I am thinking deeply about how the marks I make in clay have different characteristics, and the physical mark of one's fingertips or visual record of the hand is personal and intimate. This visible activity is the evidence of my constant presence and control within each object. Its repetitive meditation produces a private relief from my persistent anxieties, which regularly pulls me into fearful and reoccurring routines. This exploration for me is not only visual, but also physical. This is the start of my infatuation with the idea of pattern. It has its own discrete visual language and modes of communication; and through my research I am developing a method of intercommunication. The conversation is frequently modular, disconnected, or familiar allowing for discovery and curiosity between those relationships. They often reference accumulation, a timeline, or a collection. Alluding to distinct moments in my life where I have felt a sense of hopelessness, conflict, or transcendence. Implementing these ideas acts as a sort of catalyst into the way I mark or evaluate myself, measuring my status, and my progress

within the world. Through my own patterns I have created a form of coping. So with this knowledge I repetitively systematize; repetition is significant because of my personal driven narrative applied within each of my works. I believe it helps me understand and move more honestly through the space in which I live. I am creating a constant categorization of my experiences of the self in order to relate to others, which in turn gives me purpose for the work and my life. In doing this, I am not only able to freely share my beliefs and struggles, but I also construct an environment or system for my audience to generate a relationship to the work and ultimately to myself.

I would like to finish this brief introduction of my work and my thoughts with one last quote from Theodore Roosevelt who seems to understand a lot about life's struggle. I first heard this quote after reading Brené Brown's book *Daring Greatly*. It is called *The Man In the Arena*

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbles, or where the doer of deeds could have done them better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, who comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; but who does actually strive to do the deeds; who knows great enthusiasms, the great devotions; who spends himself in a worthy cause; who at the best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so, his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Brown Rene. *Daring Greatly*. New York, New York: Avery, 2012. Pg. 1.

## I. Identity:

I am an artist, an educator, a wife, daughter, sister, extrovert, and a pattern enthusiast. These are a few descriptors, which make up a tiny portion of what I call my identity. Many believe identity is created through the development of the theory of “self” and is greatly influenced by external forces such as family, friends, society, and experiences. In my own life, I have taken on many different roles in creating a narrative within my own identity, remolding myself into my current circumstances. The largest identifier in my life is being a maker, and ceramics plays an enormous role. I am loyal to those materials and find great value in understanding its many quirks. Since I have such a strong affinity toward ceramic materials I find it to be precious, it holds a high value for me due to its physical, visual, or emotional attachments I have developed over the years. This idea is difficult for me to relinquish. I believe the difficulty comes from this inward notion of strength I have placed on the material, and the extraordinary self-confidence I have assigned within my identity because of it. I believe being a maker of clay makes me feel brave. So I cling to the braveness I feel within the material, and myself hoping it will instill confidence in other areas as well.

I am discussing identity in my research because of the importance it plays in my life, and even more so during my graduate career. I believe early on while here at VCU I lost a lot of my identifiers trying to figure out how I belonged. An occurrence I believe is not my own. I sacrificed my previous identities, or put off many things in order to be here, therefore I had to shift my roles and characteristics to what I am now while here in graduate school. It was a tumultuous journey, but I am glad I struggled and persisted through it. Richard Meyer describes identity as this paradoxical idea yearning to be unique or different but also seeking a commonality within others to feel acceptance.<sup>3</sup> I’m wanting to link identity, more specifically my own, through external actions while simultaneously researching the importance of self within the identity as a maker. Personal narrative works can connect individual experiences with its viewers. This same link in my work creates vulnerability within myself, as a maker I use this to expose my

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<sup>3</sup> Meyer, Richard. “Identity.” *Critical Terms for Art History*, University of Chicago Press, 2003. Pg 347.

struggles. In turn, I am persuading my subjects with an access point towards these inter-relational objects. During my research I compared Butler's writings on identity and contrasted them with Foucault's theory of self, I found the idea of self and identity being closely connected through the discovery of Historical Ontology, and when positively merged it's referred to as personality.



***Emulation*** | 4 ½' x 2' | Artspace Gallery | 2016  
Red earthenware, decorative slip, under-glaze, wax.

Two things that I think have great influences on forming identity are interiority and exteriority. Interiority is an individual's inner character, thoughts, or feelings. While exteriority is a state or feeling of being external, or at times isolated from the "other." I believe somewhere in between these two realms is how myself and other humans discover where they belong or don't, in regards to forming identity. The French

philosopher Rene Descartes has been known to link “interiority with identity.”<sup>4</sup> Mainly because of ““privileged access,”” or “self-relation,”” this is the theory when the mind has a distinct ability to naturally recognize itself.<sup>5</sup> Meaning the human brain actively seeks out characteristics it personally identifies with in order to relate to one another. This is also the creation of how we form bonds or relationships with each other. I have had many types of relationships; some have lead into either positive or negative situations. How does one decide if a positive or negative situation has appeared, and how do we decide to seek this as part of our identity or not?



***Emulation (interior detail)*** | 4 ½' x 2' | Artspace Gallery | 2016  
Red earthenware, decorative slip, under-glaze, wax.

Richard Meyer explains the “contemporary [use of] the term “‘identity’” suggests individuals recognize themselves through a shared condition or quality, be it one of race, religion, gender, sexuality, class, or cultural origin,” also known as our interiority.<sup>6</sup> I can pinpoint a specific event in my childhood, which changed my views on whom I wanted to

<sup>4</sup> Strozier, Robert M. Foucault, Subjectivity, and Identity: Historical Constructions of Subject and Self. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002. Pg 232.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Pg 210.

<sup>6</sup> Meyer, Richard. “Identity.” Critical Terms for Art History, University of Chicago Press, 2003. Pg 345.

be associated with and whom I certainly did not. I believe this shaped who I am still today. Identity can also be found through what we do not associate ourselves with, and those actions come through in a personality of “refusal or evasion” and allude to the “exterior” of ourselves, or the “other’s” and is an alarm saying turn the other way.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps we construct our identities through neural connections with experiences and emotions, and most likely they are continuously changing in different moments in our lives.



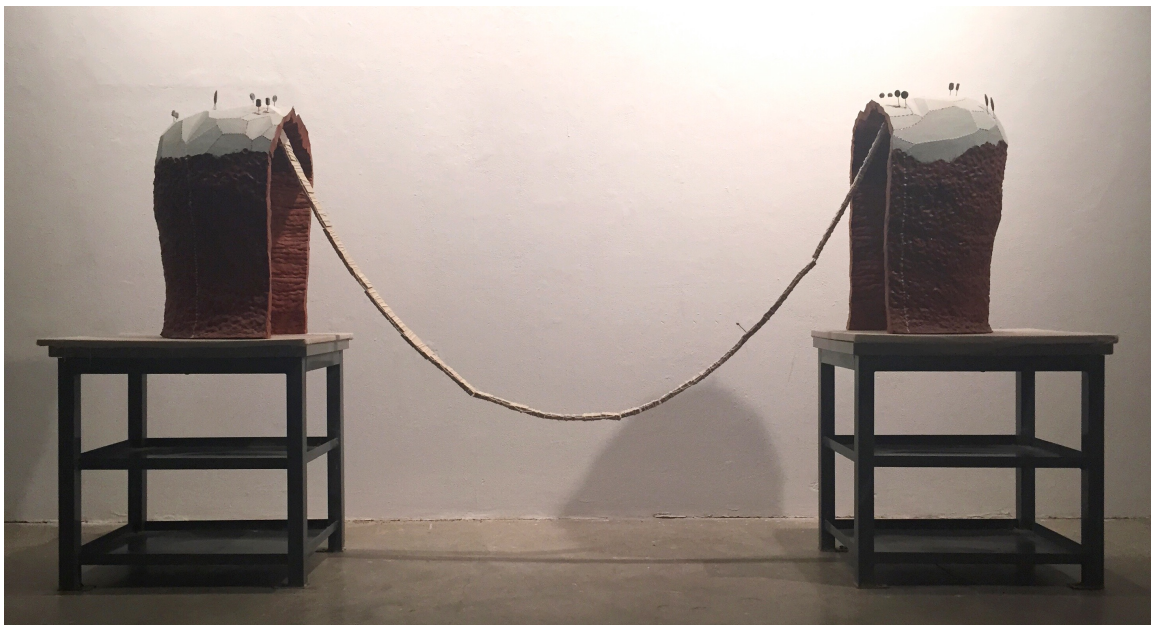
*Emulation (exterior detail)* | 4 ½' x 2' | Artspace Gallery | 2016  
Red earthenware, decorative slip, under-glaze, wax.

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<sup>7</sup> Meyer, Richard. “Identity.” *Critical Terms for Art History*, University of Chicago Press, 2003. Pg 356.

## II. My Polyhedron Metaphor:

After reading through some of Butler's research, it seemed clear she saw "identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts," and the act of creating hundreds of the same form is a clear sign of repetition.<sup>8</sup> Yet, the identity within one shape can seem to have so-much-baggage, and at times can trap a person into an unwanted existence; or instead cause the exact opposite in guiding the creator to use a form as a means to communicate with others and their surroundings.



***This Tentative Distance...* | 6 ½' x 2' x 4' | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2015**

Red earthenware, decorative slip, under-glaze, glaze, wax, nicrome wire, acrylics, flint, grog, cotton yarn, pine, roofing nail, CMC-gum, canvas, found table.

In the beginning, it was difficult for me to explain my attraction to these polyhedron-esque forms. I would often think about my faceted forms as a type of vessel, a hollow container, which physically holds nothing, but the objects themselves represents

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<sup>8</sup> Strozier, Robert M. Foucault, Subjectivity, and Identity: Historical Constructions of Subject and Self. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002. Pg 219.

and holds symbolic meanings. What is it truly holding, what does it contain, why can't I get to what's inside without shattering it? The use of a vessel has been exploited numerous times by ceramicists as a metaphor, people are vessels; therefore they will be filled and at some point emptied, and broken. There are many times I relate to these

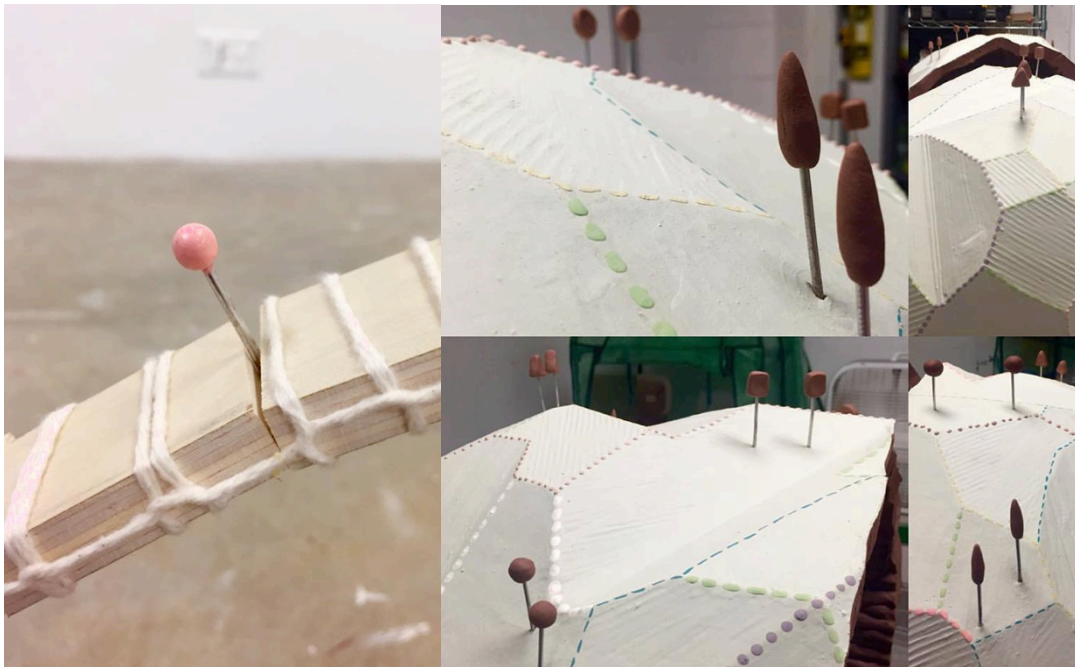


***This Tentative Distance... (Side detail)*** | 6 ½' x 2' x 4' | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2015  
 Red earthenware, decorative slip, under-glaze, glaze, wax, nicrome wire,  
 acrylics, flint, grog, cotton yarn, pine, roofing nail, CMC-gum, canvas,  
 and found tables.

polyhedron forms. I see them as these objects, that before they came to be they were nothing, but through human influence they have been changed, manipulated, and not one of them are an exact replication of the other. They each have their nuances but reference a similarity in form. Are these vessels moments of time or events in my life? Not exactly, but I do use them in a way to recreate those memories. Using the forms to resemble space



added or space taken away. Looking back through the evolution of these forms and sculptures, I often wondered what would happen if I let go of this, or what would I do without this? I tried it, I didn't necessarily like it, and so within the last year I decided to hold on with a death grip not because it was easy or familiar, but because I had lost and given up so much already I couldn't bare to give those up too. This form became an ingrained part of my identity, it was a visual communicator I wanted my audience to engage with which would replicate conversations with myself. I wanted people to see me within those forms, I wanted them to acknowledge their presence and importance, and overall I wanted them to see I was talking about myself.



***This Tentative Distance... (Details)*** | 6 ½' x 2' x 4' | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2015  
 Red earthenware, decorative slip, under-glaze, glaze, wax, nicrome wire, acrylics, flint, grog, cotton yarn, pine, roofing nail, CMC-gum, canvas, and found tables.

In the past I have been fixated on this word “Pragnanz,” a principle of Gestalt, which is German for “concise and meaningful.”<sup>9</sup> The Law of Pragnanz-is simply

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<sup>9</sup> Arnheim, Rudolf. Art and visual perception: a psychology of the creative eye. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.

translated as laws of “good form.” Within this theory, the human brain has an organizational tendency, where we tend to prefer and recognize things, which are simple and clear, rather than complex and awkward. Manipulatively, I follow this practice in my own work by using my intuition, adaptation, and my formal aesthetics on how an object is presented. The philosophy of how I formally construct something comes from my sense to either let an object breathe with ample space surrounding itself creating a clear visual calmness, or in contrast at other times engulf the work with overly ornate or decorated surface or forms. Creating these two aspects acts as a way to communicate both the simple complex parts of life that both have peace and chaos within all of us. The singular forms itself may fall under this rule of simplicity but the installations I create with many of these components are often complex and active. I am also intrigued by the idea where there are specific classifications of polyhedrons, which actually perform a function. The function being, to fill space; these polyhedrons can be used to generate a tessellation of space and take over an environment.<sup>10</sup> This sentence sparked my interest, and although my forms are not the exactitude of what these proper polyhedrons are. I started thinking about using my own forms to function in a similar manner. This idea clicked with me because of the many recent losses I was experiencing in my own life through a death of a friend and my mother being diagnosed with cancer. So in a way I was using my forms to fill a void, which was causing me distress.

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<sup>10</sup> Weisstein, Eric W. "Space Filling-Polyhedron." Wolfram Math World. Accessed October 24, 2016. <http://mathworld.wolfram.com/Space-FillingPolyhedron.html>.

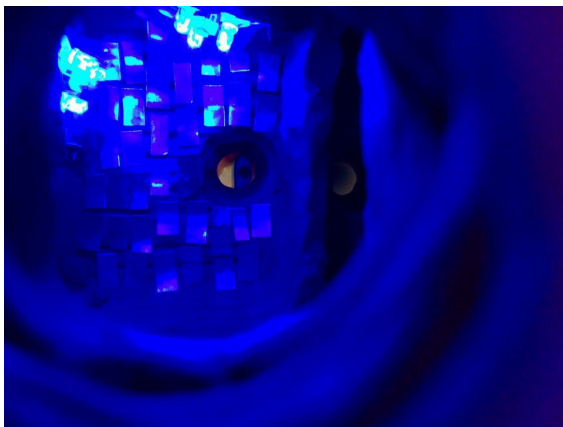
### III. Material Rituals:

It took me several years to realize in many aspects of my making I have created a sort of ritualistic habit. I lay out these rules or order of certain actions, which must be followed to get the desired result I want to accomplish. Much of this deals with formal displays, color choices, and visual decisions that will curate the work for the viewers, but before I can do any of this I must know how to manipulate my materials. While sitting down and truly taking the time to think about it, I asked myself what are my rituals in making? Preparing clay (get mask, get recipe, measure dry materials, add water, remove it, bag clay, and store it), forming clay (wedge, divide, ball, split in two, pinch, dry, score, slip, squish, dry) subtracting clay (one by one, shave down, flip, rotate, save shavings), decorating clay (lay out all the colors, variety of brushes, apply, apply), firing clay (stilt, load, repeat, push start), decorating again, second firing, connecting meaning and relevance to the object (over and over). I also realized during these short two years, I was creating habit and ritual as a distraction for myself. A sort of ritualistic/spiritual need for material, or a certain way to order or satisfy my needs as a maker to cope with my feelings. In Peter Korn's book *Why We Make Things and Why it Matters*, he explains "contemporary craft being economically marginal, is created primarily to address the spiritual needs of its maker."<sup>11</sup> I am a maker, and I have needs.

What are my rules? I think these rules are all similar in regards to form, color, and objects of the multiple. However, the rules change depending on the content. I am testing my outside forces, testing their strength, testing my own, pushing and relying on tension and release, and similarly doing it to myself all the while. These same objects are made in a reductive process and are never fully known until each facet has been worked over. My material obsession is closely linked to my identity in that I take great strides in understanding it to its full extent.

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<sup>11</sup> Korn, Peter. *Why We Make Things and Why It Matters: The Education of a Craftsman*. First ed. 2013. Pg 30.



*Process & experiment* | VCU Clay Graduate Studios | 2015-2017

#### IV. The Importance of Pattern:

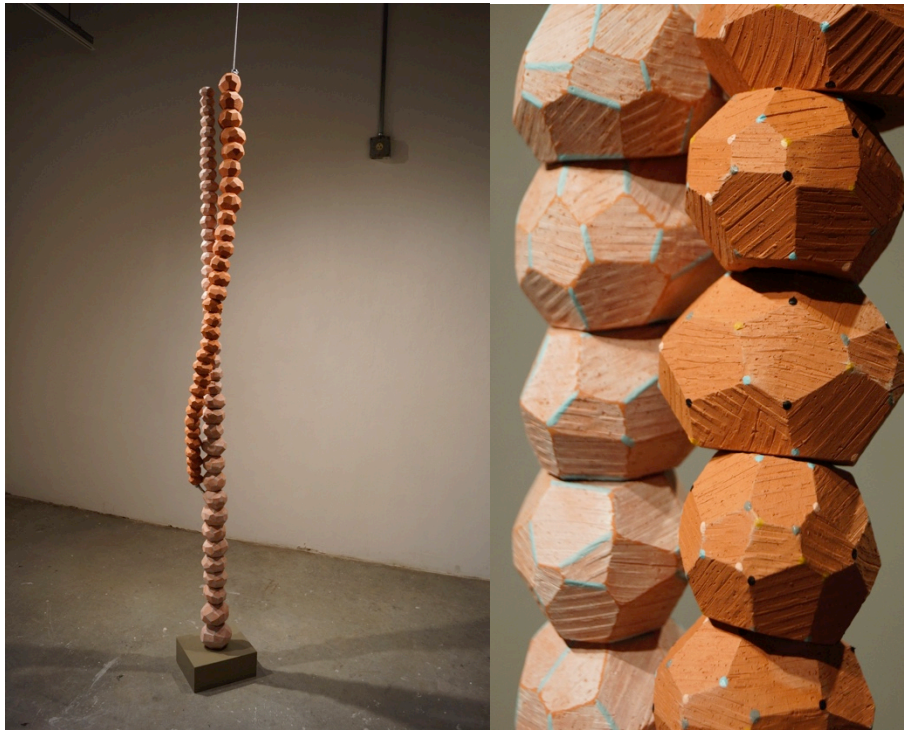
How closely do we pay attention to pattern? I have a personal theory pattern in our lives is inescapable, but it often is only acknowledged subconsciously. I see pattern in architecture, fabrics, tile work, bricks, jewelry, in music, our lifestyles, and even in our conversations. I acknowledge the events in my life to mimic pattern and question, “how can pattern be used to imitate our surroundings?” With those tactics, I use the characteristics of pattern to create a plethora of objects and imagery in the multiple.

Through much of my history of making I thought about pattern as something you simply applied to the surface of an object. However, over the years I realized I could create pattern with physical objects, and I could use this tactic to communicate with my audience in regards to space, formalism, and arrangement. Sometimes at first the patterns I create may seem arbitrary. However, I often create systems or rules for myself in order to build or complete the piece. By using those specific systems each installation has a unique or diverse way of using pattern.



*Quandary* | 4" x 6" x 5 ¼" | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2016  
Porcelain, decorative slip, under-glaze, cherry wood.

What does pattern mean to me, truly? There are four words which are hard for me to differentiate between; Pattern vs. Ornament vs. Decoration vs. Adornment. Pattern is a repeated decorated design, to give a regular or intangible form to. Ornament is a thing used to make something look more attractive but usually having no practical purpose. Decoration is the process or art of decorating or adorning something. Adornment is a thing, which adorns or decorates. Does pattern always have to be on the ceramic object,



***Fortitude* | 10' x 7" | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2016**  
Red earthenware, decorative slip, under-glaze, acrylics.

can it also be formally spaced pattern? Is it all a game I play in my head? Sometimes I wonder if I can ever mindlessly decorate, and my immediate answer is “yeah sure” but I also feel like the choices I always make are based on previous experiences. Pretty often I find myself doing what I call intentional patterning/decorating; I plan it out, try to make smart decisions about it all. My conclusion is mindless decorating can lead to surprises that weren’t expected or planned; it allows my brain to empty onto the piece and into the space without regret or obsessive planned out thought. But my intentional patterning

seems to be too controlled and too predictable, sometimes feeling sterile or lacking activity or life. Somewhere in between these two is where I would like to place myself.

I have an abundant love for the ornate. Whether it is with pattern or color, a special keepsake or every day object. I find beauty in them all, and I love to surround myself with them. Much of my obsession with this comes from my childhood. I grew up in a home surrounded by ornate objects; unknowingly my father instilled a sense of pride with those collections, which aesthetically would follow me into my own work. His love and obsession over collecting these items was passed to me as some sort of shared generational connection. His obsessive nature to collect informed my obsessive nature to create collections.

## V. Memory & Self:

There is something about memory I think artists are attracted to, but also if we choose to tie ourselves to this “type” of artwork we get judgmental glares from our peers. You know what I’m talking about. Subjective Memory is based on a given person’s experience, understanding, and feelings; personal or individual. My work isn’t necessarily about memory but I do mimic or recall past events in my life to inform the installations I create. Recently I have been fixated on what’s called traumatic memories, probably due to my previous and current circumstances. This is when “an event or events involve actual or threatened death or serious injury, or a threat to the physical integrity of self or others.” Examples include military combat, violent personal attacks, natural or human-made disasters, and torture.<sup>12</sup> For me memory has a therapeutic function, I use it to understand painful moments or tragedies I experience. Painful moments because these are the ones which are the hardest to digest, therefore I obsessively try to solve a solution for them.

The closest tie in my work to memory is the constant organizing, categorizing, and timekeeping involved in my processes. I forget nothing. I am using memory as a tool; I want to create for myself a sense of remembrance, a collection of that moment, and many times a timeline, but lightly sprinkled with my obvious awareness of control. Control plays a serious part in my work, and will often show up as some sort of formalistic function, but personally control is there because I often feel in life it is absent. This helps me find the importance of where I am now, and where I have been, then gather and calculate all the in-betweens. This is how I got here. This is where I’m going. This is where I will be. I also think memory is closely related to the theory of self and how we come to be who we are. When I quantify these feelings and objects together I am assembling a story, a pattern, a conversation with which my viewers will spark a relationship.

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<sup>12</sup>“What Are Traumatic Memories?” Sidran Institute-Traumatic Stress Education & Advocacy. 1994. Accessed January 5, 2016. <https://www.sidran.org/resources/for-survivors-and-loved-ones/what-are-traumatic-memories/>.





***Idle* | 6 ½' x 3' x 5" | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2015**

Porcelain, cobalt, under-glaze, granular ilmenite, silver leaf, antique frame, taffeta curtains.

There is a German writing term called “Bildungsroman” which is best translated as the story of a hero’s “formation of self-discovery [and] the way to self-awareness.”<sup>13</sup> We seem to each create one of those, maybe in hopes where we find our own meaning or adventure. Foucault defines the theory of self through the definition of Historical Ontology or the history of our selves. This is a philosophical analysis with the nature of our reality, and the knowledge of those relationships. I recently found a great symposium of one of Foucault’s last public lectures, *The Culture of the Self*, in the lecture he expands on the explanation of Historical Ontology and his research of the self, within the definition he breaks its structure into three categories.

Firstly, Foucault discusses the “Relations of Truth,” more plainly meaning, as human beings we seek for truth in the world; in what others do, and even more so in our personal lives.<sup>14</sup> This truth creates meaning and gives us proof by the behavior we observe. By my own human nature, I have decided the work will help me search for my truths in hopes to understand the world in which I live. Creating this work, which discusses my struggles and accomplishments through anxiety, depression, and painful or emotional experiences, allows me to connect those discoveries with others. At the same time knowing there will be those who are searching for those same feelings too.

Secondly, our “Relations to Obligations,” meaning: we may choose to accept or decline obligations we have in our lives and reject laws that are a part of societal norms.<sup>15</sup> As an artist, I often play a fine line of being part of the norm and not part of the standard. I’m accepted enough around my “normal non-artist” friends, but still seen as the weird eccentric artist, whose work no one understands, but likes the colors. I’m married, but we’ve been putting off children for my career in order to get my MFA, and some how I’m not performing my American female duties. Also, being a part of the artist clique has never come easy to me. I often feel as though I am not ironic enough, I don’t wear strange clothing or look different, and I don’t follow all these stereotypes most artists say they’re not about, but clearly are. At least in grad school they are. My Midwestern values

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<sup>13</sup> Danto, Arthur Coleman, and Lydia Goehr. *After the end of art: Contemporary art and the pale of history*. Vol. 197. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997. Pg 1.

<sup>14</sup> Foucault, Michel. "The Culture of the Self." Lecture, UC Berkley, Berkley, CA. April 12, 1983. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4QvSUYeEBQ&index=7&list=PL54CD8D8C49EEFBB1>.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.



***Idle (Detail)* | 6 ½' x 3' x 5" | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2015**

Porcelain, cobalt, under-glaze, granular ilmenite, silver leaf, antique frame, taffeta curtains.

have somehow crept into my average life. These are all struggles, which sometimes appear within my work when I feel lost, or as an outsider. Not to mention my struggles with mental health something most society turns a blind eye towards, and chooses to ignore.

Lastly, is the "Relation to Ourselves and Others," here Foucault describes scenarios in how we relate ourselves to each other.<sup>16</sup> This is something I am constantly observing in my life, for my work, and for my own understandings. In this brief three-part summary, Foucault has outlined how we as individuals arrive at the self, through what we have observed, accomplished, and experienced. We form our meanings of the

<sup>16</sup> Foucault, Michel. "The Culture of the Self." Lecture, UC Berkeley, Berkeley, CA. April 12, 1983. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4QvSUYeEBQ&index=7&list=PL54CD8D8C49EEFBB1>.

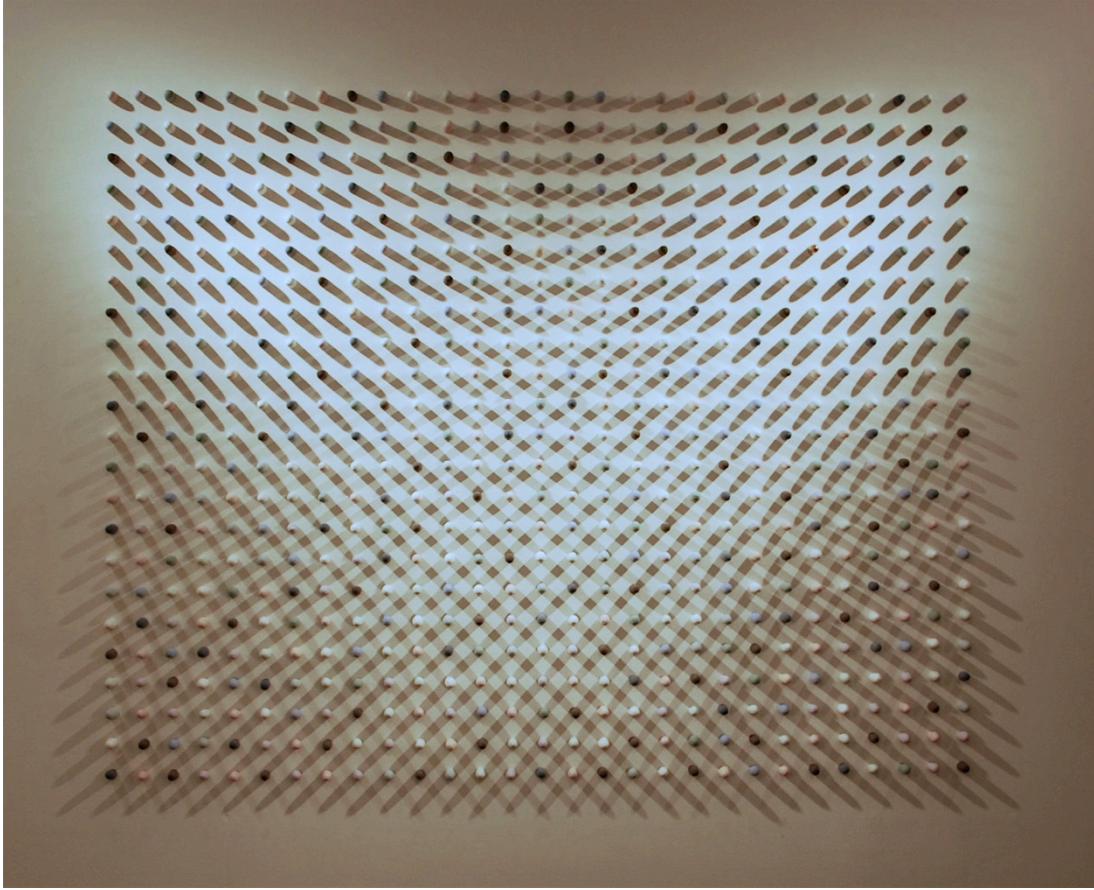
world in order to change ourselves, and we build our identity in order to change the world. Then through our memories of those experiences we form our own true identities, and throughout my work I am trying to form my own true identity.

## VI. Space & Presence:

I believe I think about space in two different ways. Firstly, I think about the obvious, an area or region not being occupied. I make formal decisions involving my works inhabiting a space in order to convey my ideas, whether my idea is of being trapped, fragile, tangled, or blocked off. Secondly, I think about space in regards to a period or pause of time. So space for me is an area in which I organize my artworks in order to communicate my message. There is a constant push and pull between the positive space (the area my sculptures actually occupy) and the negative space (is all the other surrounding areas between and around my objects) creating a unity in its formation. I want movement from my audience, to travel through my spaces, which causes someone or something to be absorbed.

There is also a difference between occupying a space vs. filling a space. Occupying a space requires time, a need to create an engaging attention of the place you have control over. While filling space is a need to inhabit an area fully, to take it all up. Filling is different than measuring. Thinking about all these things, I decided to let the life events I was experiencing inform the artwork I would make. So I used those tactics to fuel it, and inform the space I created. Timelines seem to pop up a lot in my work and are important to me because within those timelines I am placing myself. I am physically part of this timeline, which for myself is important because it grounds my presence within this work. There is a constant act of time keeping, record keeping, constantly counting, and reevaluating my work and myself.

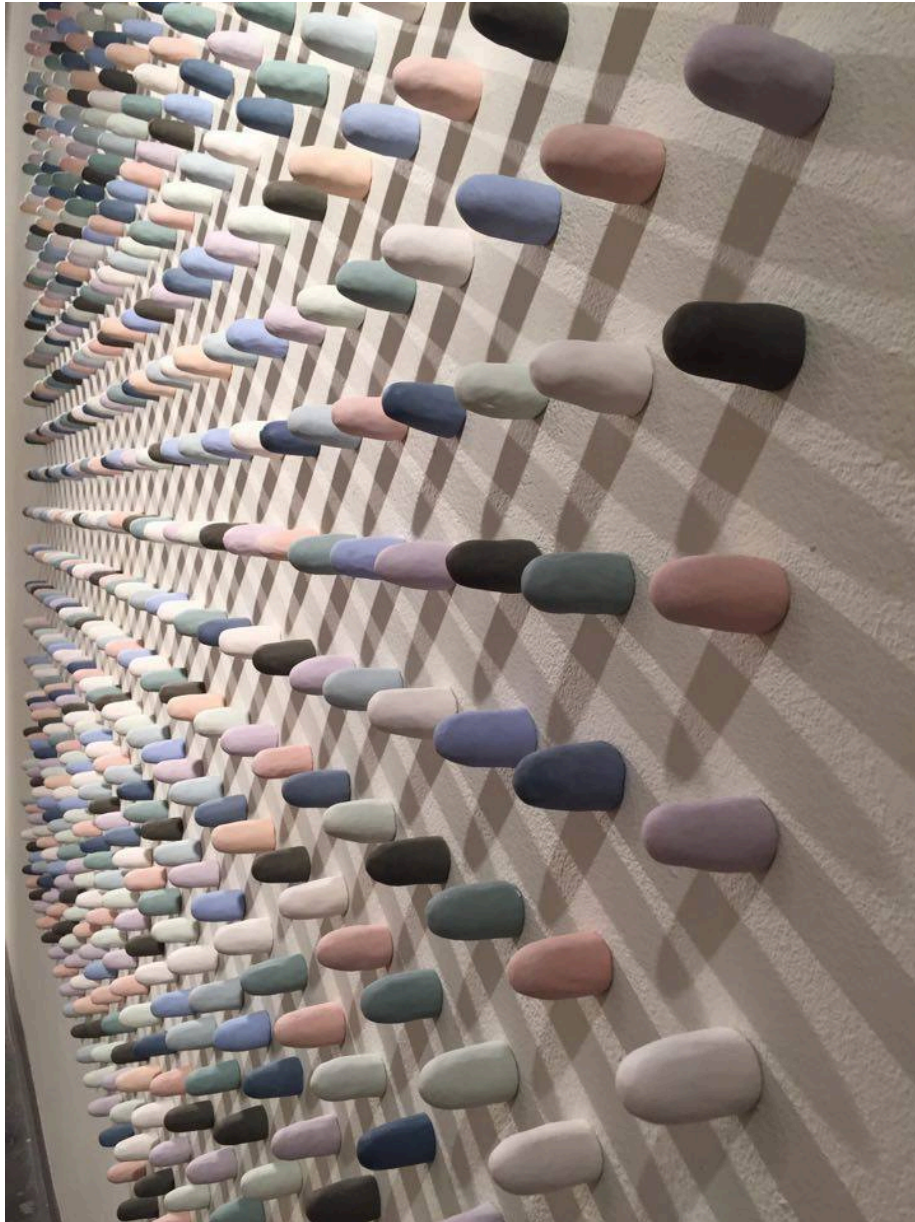
Within the last two years I started paying attention to the marks I left behind in clay. I made conscious decisions on whether I thought they had some significance or not. I started playing with the idea of amplifying human presence, more specifically my presence. I contrasted the look of my imprinted fingertips with a sharp edge of an object being tooled over. I asked myself what does this mean? One reveals or leaves my impression permanently, while the other removes it completely to leave a tool mark I



***Umbra* | Art Space Gallery | 6' x 7' x 2" | 667 pieces | 2016**  
Tinted Porcelain, porcelain, enamel paint, shadow, and light.

created. The question is how do I maintain myself in what I do, or do I sometimes rest in the tension? I approached it with a whole heartedness, and tried to understand how I could engage with the world from a place of worthiness. My worthiness came from an ability to make, something that's pretty expected considering we are known to be an object making species. My handwork, this is an action to me that reveals the humanity in a piece. The time spent to fuss over an object or what one of my professors likes to call "cat licking," the act of over obsessiveness to make something just so. There is a material honesty to it, one has a material response and acts according to what feels good in the mind and body. Someone may take a long journey; they create a stack of rocks saying, "I was here." I also have a strong inclination to call order to my objects; it's the only thing I do this with. Which leads me to confess; I believe it is the only true thing I have control over. Or do I? I use my installations to enhance a sense of body and form connection; the

objects and body talk to each other. Yet in my system of organizations there still lies a presence of disorder. Here is where I also see my human presence and my flaws. I am not a machine, no matter how hard I try, and my human mistakes and imperfections still are open to the world.



***Umbra (Detail)*** | Art Space Gallery | 6' x 7' x 2" | 667 pieces | 2016  
Tinted Porcelain, porcelain, enamel paint, shadow, and light.

## VII. Vulnerability:

Vulnerability, not a word I often thought about until about a year ago. The only time I ever even used the word was when I was in uncomfortable situations, and it always had a negative connotation. In Brené Brown's book, *Daring Greatly*, she defines vulnerability as being "the core, the heart, the center, of meaningful human experiences."<sup>17</sup> She also says vulnerability plus worthiness equals wholeheartedness. It is extremely difficult for me to be vulnerable in my artwork, because it means I have to let go of some control. Control in how others perceive my work and me, that's scary. I don't like the feeling of releasing control and being uncomfortable and exposed. However, one way I like to show vulnerability within the work is to leave the remnants of the process. I also at times will even leave a piece unfired or dry looking. This aesthetic speaks fragileness to me and in turn speaks vulnerability as well. Revealing raw clay as a way to



*If I Told You, You'd Feel Bad For Me* | 7' x 5" x 1' | VCU Crit-Gallery | 2016  
Porcelain, and punctures.

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<sup>17</sup> Brown Rene. *Daring Greatly*. New York, New York: Avery, 2012. Pg. 12.



create intimacy between the viewer and myself by discovering nuances in my objects. I like to call this “Material Honesty,” choosing to recognize my attention to internal and external structures because I am thinking about my own internal structures, and revealing vulnerability to my subject matter. Vulnerability? Am I being vulnerable, is there a link to the fragileness of unfired clay and vulnerability? Recently I was reacquainted with the word *Simulacrum*. It means to make an image or representation of someone or something, and although it is a simplistic definition there is something captivating about trying to make something, which represents ones self. I am particularly interested in this obsession I have in using pattern to mimic my life. There are so many avenues I think about when pursuing this process for myself. There is aesthetics, formalism, forcing this idea of iteration and pattern, personification, empathy, and mostly the notion of creating mimesis. However, I have to be careful to not expose too much because this can reveal my weaknesses.



***This Dark Thought*** | 3' x 5' x 2 ½' | Art Space Gallery || 2016  
Porcelain, granular Ilmenite, vinyl.

VIII.  
Cōpia-Thesis:



*Cōpia* | Anderson Gallery | 2017



*Cōpia* | Anderson Gallery | 2017

I have been exploring and creating my thesis body of work for over a year now, but it wasn't until I put the work together as a whole when I realized it was communicating a specific message. Looking at the work presently, I can see I am curating a journey, one that is a representation of myself, and how I am moving through my world. For myself, the work displays many different venues of my life such as, beauty, sadness, and courage. My hope for the show was to foster a relationship with my viewers in feeling as though they had left experiencing a deep personal conversation with me. The title of the show is from Latin origin meaning in abundance, but in other versions it refers to copying or to imitate. I also enjoyed the playful sound of the word referencing coping, something I believed myself to be doing.



***Curious* | 6' x 8' x 8" | Anderson Gallery | 2017**  
Varying ceramic materials, MDF.

When first entering the room, the viewer is confronted with a large white barrier, which both blocks and creates open space, in order to play with the audience's viewpoints. The wall like structure both references framing with its vertical wooden forms, but also has a linear landscape that separates itself from the different plains of the

gallery. This structure is meant to act as a contemporary recreation towards a cabinet of curiosities, and I have used its many open structures to playfully arrange my sculptures inside. Each rectangle is pedestal like and modular, I have done this so I can allow myself to recreate this piece in different ways. For this show I wanted them to feel separate but part of something larger, and I used them to frame different forms of my work based within the gallery.

The piece is called *Curious*. At its highest point it stands 6ft tall, and its lowest point being only 5in, while its entirety is approximately 8ft long. The many different sculptures showcase a glimpse into my creative process and the way my mind works. My hopes for this piece are to be slightly jarring by obstructing the audience's view but also curious because I allow small openings for discovery. This sort of collecting is not something new or out of the ordinary for myself. Proudly displaying items in a cabinet collection manner was a regular occurrence I grew up with in my home. I learned to organize and create vignettes of antique collected items, creating conversations between the pieces aesthetically but unknowingly. When planning for this work it was a natural inclination to do what I had already been taught my whole life, but this time it would be with purpose. In this collection you will find a variety of forms. Some are my standard polyhedrons, but many of them are new and different for me. I wanted to have fun with this piece.



***Curious (Details)* | 6'x 8' x 8" | Anderson Gallery | 2017**  
Varying ceramic materials, MDF.

There are ones that have added colored porcelain coils, glaze, decals, luster, wax, enamel, and dry materials, like mica and granular ilmenite. Specific ones such as the one

covered in mica, are my favorite, and I place it towards the top because I am proudly displaying it. Each one carried a different skill that I have acquired over the years, bright and dull colors, gloss and matte surfaces, dry and smushed textures, all things that I see as additions to my bag of tricks. In total they are a ceramic nerds delight. Each space showcases a different form, and I do this in order to let them breathe. I displayed and unraveled them, revealing their entirety much like if one were to examine the knowledge from an individuals brain. I love how this piece can catch someone's eye in many different ways, and for me this is my hook. I have drawn you into the space to have you asking for more.



***Impressed*** | 8" x 2" x 2 ¼" | Anderson Gallery | 2017  
Colored porcelain, granular ilmenite, cherry wood.

Coming around the edge of *Curious* your eyes are drawn to a large white mound, but then you see something black and glittery out of the left corner of your eye. Here you will find the piece called *Impressed*. It is a tightly enclosed box, which holds pastel

candy like tiles inside. I placed this piece low to the floor because I wanted my viewer to get intimate with it, and I wanted them to feel the physical movement of their body taking the extra step to get lower into a better viewing stance. The piece is a small 2in by 8in cherry wooden frame, which encases the colored tiles in a precariously tightly stacked manner. Jammed between them all in a most awkward way is a miniature polyhedron covered in what seems to be black glitter (but is actually granular ilmenite). This piece itself is about the responsibilities and overwhelming negative thoughts one can leave built up and neglected, but at the same time hold in and hide in order to appear normal. This piece was, and still is, a serious part of my life where I felt a lot of hopelessness. I had experienced a number of unfortunate events causing me to be lost in my identity causing a fear of entrapment. This state of mind can be detrimental to any individual, even those who are the strongest. I'm glad to say I pushed through this and moved on. The colored tiles represent all those overwhelming responsibilities, while the little black piece is my spirit, and the frame itself is me physically trying to hold it all in. This piece exemplifies the pressure one feels when trapped or confined in a situation; its power is small but mighty.

As you glance up to your right, there is a large wall installation drawing you in. The piece is sizable and incredibly detailed with an overwhelming amount of hand drawn pattern, with an enormous hanging ceramic piece on top of it. The drawing itself references like something from a Sol Lewit, and encases the ceramic sculpture much like a frame would a painting. This piece is called *My Albatross*. I experimented with the installation towards the end of last semester more than two times. For thesis I had finally felt I understood how to display it in order to get the right reaction out of my audience. It is placed within a corner of a room; this is because of the overarching feeling of its subject matter. It resembles something of a portrait, which is then annihilated with stenciled graphite patterns. The rectangle wraps around the corner and is smaller on the left than the right side, in order to show growth or movement. The stencils used to create the pattern are representations of what is actually hanging on the wall. There is a small circle, a large circle, and a flattened out two-dimensional polyhedron. The pattern for this is not so much an order to the forms placement but an order into which it is physically



*My Albatross* | 7' x 5 ¼' x 10" | Anderson Gallery | 2017  
Porcelain, red earthenware, glaze, acrylic, paracord, graphite.

created, all the while trying to convey a sense of anxiousness that is brought on by frustrations. The drawing within this installation is functioned towards engulfing the ceramic piece from any sort of freedom. I have made a great number of polygonal ceramic forms in multiple colors of earthenware, porcelain, and brightly colored glazes, and there are also red earthenware rings hanging from this same place. These are tied together with cord



***My Albatross (Details)*** | 7' x 5 ¼' x 10" | Anderson Gallery | 2017  
Porcelain, red earthenware, glaze, acrylic, paracord, graphite.

and draped through the hanging mechanism on the wall. For each corded thread, there is one ceramic form placed at the top. These ceramic pieces act as an immovable congestion, and towards the top they cannot be physically changed. The cord stretches for two feet and is joined by more ceramic pieces creating a large bundle towards the end.



The length of the cord is directed downward, and pushes the piece to create an overall sense of heaviness. This piece is about how I cope with my anxiety and fears, collecting them and hanging them to see its visual heavy presence within my life. - In Foucault's lecture he speaks freely about how...

“Most of the techniques of the self have been integrated in our world in educational, pedagogical, medical, and psychological techniques. These structures are substituted for and transformed by public opinions and mass media polling techniques. Which play a formative roll in our attitude towards the others and towards our selves, so that the culture of the self is now imposed on people by the other, and the culture of the self has lost its independence.”<sup>18</sup>

Foucault's words both summarized and legitimized my struggle within my identity, while also uncovering experiences, which caused negative thoughts in my life. I found life to be challenging because of my unwillingness to follow its social norms.

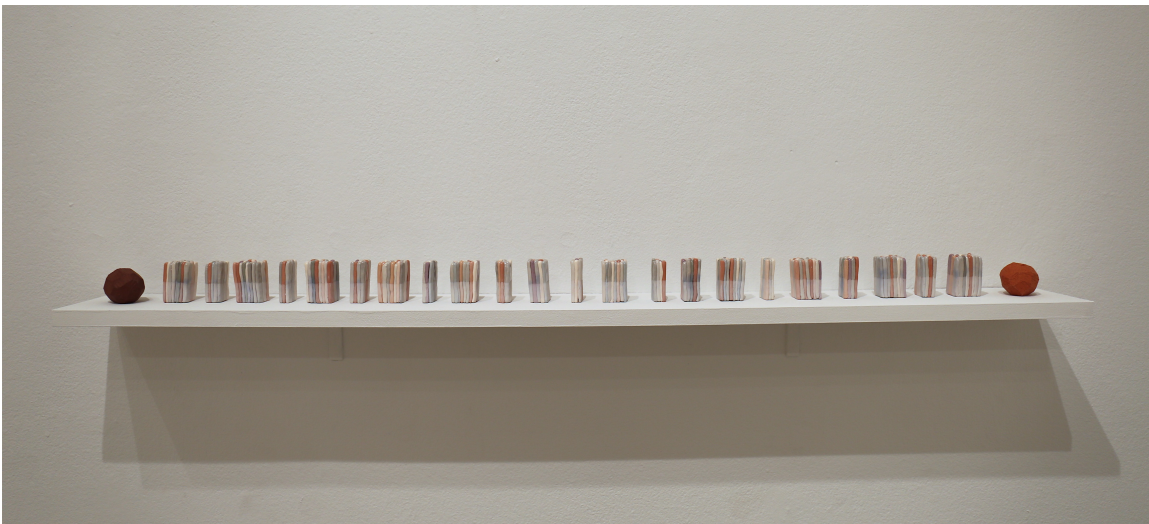


***My Albatross (Detail)* | 7' x 5 ¼' x 10" | Anderson Gallery | 2017**  
Porcelain, red earthenware, glaze, acrylic, paracord, graphite.

While creating *My Albatross*, I wanted many gestures of labor to showcase my burdens. In my life I have had many struggles, but the one I battle with the most is my frustrations with anxiety and depression. Although I have learned to combat those feelings, it is a constant reminder I carry with me everyday. This piece allowed me to

<sup>18</sup> Foucault, Michel. "The Culture of the Self." Lecture, UC Berkley, Berkley, CA. April 12, 1983.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4QvSUYeEBQ&index=7&list=PL54CD8D8C49EEFBB1>.

create a visual language to express these emotions. I have hung the piece above eye level so my audience may approach it and have this physical relationship with it. My hope is my viewers feel a sense of weight, labor, and obsession, and by revealing those activities one would cause a sense of personal physical reflection. Is being a burden socially constructed? Feeling burden is either something someone told you, or taught you, and you have accepted it. Recently I found this poem titled *The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner*. This is where the title of my piece is derived from. In this poem the mariner is punished for a heinous act he committed by killing the albatross (something that usually brings good luck) and by doing so he brings terrible misfortune to his crew. He is forced to wear the deceased bird around his neck as punishment. I often feel I have to wear or carry my own burden of depression and anxiousness by hiding it away from others so they may not judge or grow tired of my complaints and struggles. The difference being, I didn't deserve this but yet some how feel the need to control it.



***Duality* | 4' x 5 ½" x 3" | Anderson Gallery | 2017**  
Colored porcelain, Illinois local clay, Virginia local clay, and glaze.

Operating in a circular motion through the work we see an elongated shelf with colorful forms affixed atop. This piece is called *Duality*. The shelf is 4 feet long helping to allude to the extended distance talked about within the piece. When I first started

thinking about this I reflected back to the earlier work I made called *This Tentative Distance...* I thought a lot about how I feel in the circumstance now verses from before. My original piece was about the longing to be back with my family, my husband, and things familiar and comfortable. Yet *Duality* wasn't about this. It was about having two homes and feeling like part of both of them. The polyhedrons themselves have a noticeable difference in color. The darker brown form is a locally sourced clay from my home in Illinois, while the brighter orange one is from here in Virginia. I wanted these two pieces to talk about likeness by replicating similar forms, but simultaneously using color as to show their difference. There are beautiful colored porcelain stacks that separate the two from a great distance. They are familiar and show a sense of grounded repetition. They represent connection and space, but simultaneously create a presence of backward and forward communication between the two. These two polyhedrons in a way represent the constant state of feeling pulled in different directions both pleasant and bad. The connector between these two materials is me, therefore I am constantly in a dualistic state.



*In Dust and Ashes 42:6 (Detail) | 2' x 2' x 4' | Anderson Gallery | 2017*  
Raw colored porcelain.

Directly behind *Duality* is a piece called *In Dust and Ashes 42:6*. The nature of this work is fragile, dirty, and complex. It consists of unfired raw colored porcelain. There is an obvious cyclical structure about it, and yet it also references a timeline. The colors overlap but remain separate and of varying sizes. The work on the top surface is brightly illuminated as to bring attention to itself, while the collection below is hidden under its shadow. Human beings don't always reveal everything. This piece was entirely about physically reducing a material into its smallest components. I had a conversation with a mentor a few months back where they questioned the powerful presence of a large object verses a tiny one. This notion stuck in my head and I had to figure it out.



***In Dust and Ashes 42:6* | 2' x 2' x 4' | Anderson Gallery | 2017**  
Raw colored porcelain.

I started thinking about how some of the most influential people in this world have been through difficult times, and even though they survived those circumstances they weren't marred by them they wore them proudly as badges of honor. I think about people like Barack Obama, J.K. Rowling, Keanu Reeves, and many others who choose to push beyond their circumstance and make something amazing out of a terrible situation. I started reflecting about how life reductively changes you and I found a connection between this and the process in which I create my work. I created if you could imagine a jawbreaker of colored layers of clay, then I sat on the floor in the gallery and reductively took away each layer by layer with my surform tool. At some point during the night I thought to myself this is crazy, but it was right and true. I physically put myself through the process and I thought back to things I have been through and how even though they're a mix in both painful and joyful things. I felt stronger because of it. The name of this piece is a biblical reference to the Book of Job. In this section of the book he is worn, feeling like he can't go on, yet is still faithful to the cause. I am still faithful to this cause.



*Anticipation* | 2' x 2' x 4' | Anderson Gallery | 2017  
Shaved/fired porcelain, luster.

Beside the previous piece sits *Anticipation*. I see these two pieces as having a conversation with each other; one, which implies the mark and collection of its temporality and the other gripping to its permanent virtue. *Anticipation* was brought

through the infatuation with my buckets and buckets of left over remnants from surforming all my polyhedrons. I found friends and professors enjoying its tactile nature and being tempted to touch and manipulate its many forms. I made this in honor of my professor's investigations during my committee. It was a weird collection of itself, waiting to be turned into reclaim for my next new batch of clay. I thought about what an artwork using this material might look like, and I played with the notions of ceramic hierarchy. I used a form (a polyhedron) that was the most important to me, due to its strong ties in my personality. I lustered its entirety, and gently placed it on top of the highest stacked mound I could create with the shavings pointing towards the sky. Luster is a material that many ceramic and non-ceramic folks "lust" over, so I used it as a carefully planned distraction. This mound represented a false sense of support for me, and it spoke about building up an object of desire and waiting for the next best moment. The anticipation of what's to come, the future, and whether this is good or bad, and placing things on thrones when maybe what you had all along was good enough.



*I Forgive You* | 3 ½' x 3 ½' x 2' | Anderson Gallery | 2017  
Porcelain.

Lastly we see the large mound on the floor it is at the center of this body of work. The piece is called *I Forgive You*. It culminates how I feel about obsessive making and thoughts. So much so, I felt I couldn't even work fast enough for what I wanted to be doing. I wanted this piece to feel overwhelming or massive based on the weight I was trying to talk about, but the funny thing is although there are many forms it didn't feel this way. I constantly was being told it felt calming and serene, and I realized forgiveness is similar. Choosing to forgive and let go of something is incredibly difficult, especially when it is painful. Yet, if one can do so the weight and heaviness I was stating previously, will be lifted and taken away. This piece was specifically for all the times I had ever felt being wronged. Obsessing over these events was not doing me a favor or creating wholeness in my life, so I realized I needed to let it go and forgive. I wasn't



*I Forgive You* | 3 ½' x 3 ½' x 2' | Anderson Gallery | 2017

Porcelain.

only forgiving others but I was forgiving myself too. I had placed myself in certain positions where I didn't stand up for my thoughts or speak out, and it caused me many

unwanted worries and strife. I was no longer going to let people step all over me because I am a kind generous person. I needed to start taking care of me. I like to think about this piece as a visual release. When I think about its action I see myself physically taking each one of those forms from my body and dropping it into the pile. I also see this work as never ending, it will continue to grow, and in a way that will show positive progress. Forgiveness is a funny thing. It has hierarchies of what can be forgiven, what cannot, and everything in between. I myself am usually a pretty forgiving person but I realized I was holding on to too many wrongdoings and it was making me miserable. Since the creation and break through of this piece I can more easily let go, and I am thankful for this.



## IX. Conclusion

Something always evident in my work, and which drives the inspiration, is my self-experiences and self-reflection. I think this has become what is known as an Ascesis for me, meaning my art practice has become a strict discipline of self-examination in order to understand myself, and the world through being a maker. In Descartes' writings, he suggests turning to our "own interiority in order to construct the outer world,"<sup>19</sup> but explaining "the artist as alien, who produces him/herself by self-inquiry, self-experience, self-knowledge, and consequent self-constitution as a unique interiority discontinuous from the social," remains in paradox because our need for community.<sup>20</sup>

Therefore in my work I will hold on to the truths I find within my self-experience and in my objects, and claim "the physical presence of [my] objects and the significance of how those physical objects are used for crucial dimensions of meaning [for myself]."<sup>21</sup> Reflecting on this idea, I will continue to systemize, collect, and evaluate my presence in the world because it is how I find value, which is where my worth is.

In conclusion every individual develops uniquely and is influenced by their surrounding world; these influences can have negative and positive affects. However, without these external forces one would never truly be able to discover who we are to ourselves, subjectively; and who we are to others, objectively. I would like to think my external influences both good and bad have shaped me into a wonderful human being with a pretty extraordinary identity.

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<sup>19</sup> Strozier, Robert M. Foucault, Subjectivity, and Identity: Historical Constructions of Subject and Self. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002. Pg 214.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid. Pg 230.

<sup>21</sup> Kirkham, Pat and Attfield, Judy. "Introduction." The Gendered Object. Manchester University Press, 1996. Pg 4.

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- 2017 Masters of Fine Arts, Craft/Material Studies- Ceramics, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
- 2014 Post Baccalaureate-Special Student University Wisconsin-Madison Madison, WI
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Bachelor of Fine Arts, Cum Laude, Illinois State University, Normal, IL
- 2010 Associates in Art, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL  
Associates in Science, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL
- 2003 Dental Assisting Certificate, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

- 2017 VCU Travel Grant, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
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- 2015 GSA Scholarship, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
- 2013 Normal Editions Workshop Best Undergraduate in Printmaking, Illinois State University, Normal, IL  
Windgate Fellowship Nominee, The Center for Craft, Creativity, & Design
- 2012 Arrowmont School of Art and Craft Scholarship, Gatlinburg, TN  
Irving S. Tick Award in Ceramics, Illinois State University, Normal, IL
- 2011 Illinois State University Outstanding Ceramics Award, Illinois State University, Normal, IL
- 2010 IVCC Permanent collection Purchasing Award, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL

## PROFESSIONAL & TEACHING EXPERINCES

- 2017 Co-Coordinator for multiple fundraising events, VCU Clay area.  
Shaping Bodies Symposium, VCUarts Craft/Material Studies, volunteer  
T.O.A.S.T. VCUarts Craft/Material Studies fundraising, donated work & Volunteered during auction

- 2016 Adjunct Instructor- Courses taught: Summer Beginning Ceramics Course and Art Foundations Ceramics, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA  
 RVA Clay Tour, Co-leader in curating Clay Tour at VCU, Richmond, VA  
 Co-leader in organizing funding/presentation of VCU Clay's Annual VCU-Haul at NCECA, Kansas City, Mo.  
 Teaching Assistant to Sarah Turner, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
- 2015 Teaching Assistant to Andrea Keys Connell, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA  
 Interactive Group Performance with Bohyun Yoon, reenacting *Glassorganism*, In Light Richmond 2015 at the VMFA, Richmond, VA  
 Ceramic workshop & lecture, Illinois Central College, Peoria, IL  
 Printmaking workshop, Illinois Central College, Peoria, IL
- 2014 Ceramic Workshop for at-risk students, City Life Ministries, Peoria, IL  
 West Main Public Mural, Non-For Profit-Renaissance Park Community Association, Peoria, IL  
 Teaching Assistant to Gerit Grimm, University Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI
- 2013 Teaching assistant to Ariel Brice, University Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI  
 Student Member of Clay Collective, University Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI
- 2012 Co-President of Ceramic RSO S.I.L.L.I.C.A, Illinois State University, Normal, IL  
 Uptown Normal-Maya Hayuk Mural, Normal, IL
- 2011 Co-President of Ceramic RSO S.I.L.L.I.C.A, Illinois State University, Normal, IL
- 2011 Archie Bray, Volunteer, Silent Auction and Guest Registration, Helena, MT

## **WORKSHOPS**

- 2012 Arrowmont School of Art and Craft, Volumetric Image Transfer Workshop, Forrest Lesch-Middelton, Gatlinberg, TN
- 2013 University of Illinois, Mold Making Workshop, Andrew Martin, Champaign, IL

## **EXHIBITIONS**

- 2017 *Cōpia*, MFA Thesis Exhibition, Anderson Art Gallery, Richmond, VA
- 2016 */Material*, VCU Fab Gallery, Richmond, VA  
 Reed-Gumenick Upper School Library, Collegiate School, Richmond, VA  
*PRACTICE*, MFA Candidacy Exhibition, Artspace, Richmond, VA

- VCU-Haul*, VCU Clay Area Group Exhibition at NCECA, Kansas City, MO
- 2015 *This Just In*, The Depot-Virginia Commonwealth Gallery, Richmond, VA
- 2014 The Muir Building Printed Panel Project, Muir Omni Graphics, Peoria, IL  
 The Muir Mural Artists, The Art Garage Studio and Gallery, Peoria, IL  
 The Better Block Artists, The Art Garage Studio and Gallery, Peoria, IL  
*Wide Open*, Bright Red Studios, Madison, WI  
*Clay/Material*, UW Wisconsin-Madison Ceramics, Common Wealth Gallery, Madison, WI
- 2013 *RATHWASH*, University Wisconsin-Madison Art Lofts, Madison, WI  
*Student Annual Juried Exhibition 2013*, Jurors Tony Tasset & John Bonadies, Illinois State University, University Galleries, Normal, IL  
*Architectonic Composites-BFA Solo Show*, Illinois State University, University Galleries, Normal, IL  
 Jan Brandt Galleries, Bloomington, IL  
*Collected Verses*, Milner Library, Illinois State University, Normal, IL  
*Print Ed: Here:There*, Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick, Ireland  
*Veso-BFA Group Exhibition*, Transpace Gallery, Normal, IL
- 2012 *Bound Together-Book Show*, Transpace Gallery, Normal, IL  
*27 Degrees-BFA Group Exhibitions*, Transpace Gallery, Normal, IL  
*Student Annual Juried Exhibition 2012*, Jurors Buzz Spector & Michael Brown, Illinois State University, University Galleries, Normal, IL
- 2011 *Oubliette---Art Sh-Oh-w*, Bloomington, IL  
*Student Annual Juried Exhibition 2011*, Jurors Tumelo Mosaka & Robert Rowe Illinois State University, University Galleries, Normal, IL
- 2010 *Annual Community Art Show*, Princeton Public Library, Princeton, IL
- 2010 *IVCC Annual Student Art Show*, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL
- 2009 *IVCC Annual Student Art Show*, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL
- 2008 *IVCC Annual Student Art Show*, Illinois Valley Community College, Oglesby, IL

## **PRINT PORTFOLIO PARTICIPATION**

- 2013 *Paper Beginnings*, A sketchbook portfolio exchange between artists, Bloomington, IL

- Collected Verses*, An exchange between students, faculty, and staff of Illinois State University (Normal, IL) and the Limerick School of Art and Design (Limerick, Ireland)
- 2012 *Fall Advance Intaglio Portfolio Exchange*, students and Associate Professor Sarah Smelser, Illinois State University, Normal, IL
- 2012 *Spring Advance Intaglio Portfolio Exchange*, students and Associate Professor Sarah Smelser, Illinois State University, Normal, IL
- 2011 *Fancy Parties*, Fall Portfolio Exchange, students and Associate Professor Sarah Smelser, Illinois State University, Normal, IL

## ARTIST ASSISTANT

- 2016 Sarah Turner, Adjunct Professor Craft/Materials Department-Clay area, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
- 2015 Andrea Keys Connell, Assistant Professor Craft/Materials Department-Clay area, Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, VA
- 2013 Gregory Page, Associate Professor of Printmaking at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

## COLLECTIONS

- 2013 Illinois State University, Normal, IL  
Limerick School of Art and Design, Limerick, Ireland
- 2011 Jan Brandt Galleries, Bloomington, IL
- 2010 Illinois Valley Community College Private Collections, Oglesby, IL

## PRESS & ONLINE PRESENCE

- 2016 **Virginia Select Blog**, <http://www.vaselect.com/artspace-upcoming-exhibitions-april-22-may-22-2016/>
- Artspace**, <http://artspacrichmond.tumblr.com/post/143491044854/shannon-slaight-brown-practice-thru-may-22>
- 2014 **The Art Of Sculpture**, <http://theartofsculpture.tumblr.com/search/Shannon+Slaight-Brown>
- Ceramic City**, <http://ceramiccity.tumblr.com/>
- University Wisconsin-Madison**, <http://www.education.wisc.edu/soe/news-events/news/2014/04/24/uw-madison-ceramic-students-showcasing-work-across-town>
- Illinois State University School of Art Gallery-Ceramics**, [http://gallery.ilstu.edu/finearts/main.php?g2\\_itemId=53](http://gallery.ilstu.edu/finearts/main.php?g2_itemId=53)

- Illinois State University School of Art Gallery-Printmaking**, [http://gallery.ilstu.edu/finearts/main.php?g2\\_itemId=50&g2\\_page=1](http://gallery.ilstu.edu/finearts/main.php?g2_itemId=50&g2_page=1)
- 2013 **The Daily Vidette**, <http://www.videtteonline.com/index.php/2013/04/29/exhibit-features-printmakers-from-isu-and-limerick/>

## **SKILLS**

Hand building & throwing of functional work in clay, glaze and clay formulation, slip casting, extruding of clay, firing of clay in electric and gas. Multiple part molds made in plaster, alginate, silicone, and wax. Limited basic woodworking skills, and beginner skills on a wood lathe. Multiple uses of silk screening for image transfer, ceramic decals, and slip trailing imagery. Skills involving the use of anything Intaglio print related, collage, shincole papers, monotype, and mating and framing of 2-D work.