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Accumulation

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Accumulation

Erin McCarty

Thesis submitted to the College of Creative Arts
at West Virginia University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Fine Arts in Ceramics

Shoji Satake, M.F.A., committee chair

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School of Art and Design

Morgantown, West Virginia

2020

Keywords: Ceramics, Sculpture, Mixed Media, Accumulation, Ceramic

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Abstract

Accumulation

This written Thesis is the supporting documentation for *Accumulation*, a Master of Fine Arts Thesis Exhibition at West Virginia University. This exhibition creates an environment in which a viewer can enter. This installation environment is created based on formal elements combined with fantastical elements from the imagination of the artist. The formal choices in the work provoke a positive otherworldly and whimsical response in the viewer. The environment is designed to provide relief from problems in the everyday world through patterns, forms, colors and surfaces. These elements are harvested from the natural world and recombined in a fantastical way. This installation contains ceramic and mixed media sculptures in the gallery space. The goal of the work is to provide experiential relief for the artist and the viewer from the mundane qualities of everyday life.

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I would like to express my genuine gratitude to all of my committee members, professors, and fellow graduate students over the years. I would also like to thank my friends for the support, assistance, and insights during the time of my M.F.A. degree. Finally, I would like to thank my amazing family for all their support along the way. This exhibition concludes a three-year journey of experimentation and discovery to find my way through this degree and the larger world of fine art. I have begun to find my visual language and am truly thankful to everyone who played a role in my artistic development.

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i. Introduction

The Master of Fine Arts exhibition titled *Accumulation* stems from my research involving the meditative process of making art, and the creation of an environment. These are inspired by my personal experiences and the physical world around me. This mixed media installation is an immersive experience created through the combinations of a large quantity of ceramic and mixed media sculptures (2020, Fig. 1). Each ceramic sculpture is a structure built from repetitive building techniques combining ceramic coils, slabs, and various surface treatments. These structures are built in reference to man-made and naturally fabricated objects that emphasize the patterns, repetition and structural growth. The sculptures exist as individual objects, but these structures then combine into a collective of forms, creating an installation environment. This collection resembles a garden or architectural landscape. This immersive landscape provides a positive and whimsical space for viewers, with the goal to overwhelm the viewer with this idea of play. The installation space provides an escape from the everyday experience of life that can often be trying or difficult for an individual. Through form and color this installation emphasizes whimsy, fun, and humor. I employ a dialectic to relate these objects to one's own body and to make the viewer aware of their own existence within the space. These fantastical mixed-media installations are made in reference to the artist's imagination and the natural and man-made world, to provide a replacement or escape from the difficulties of everyday life. I created this installation as a relief for myself but hope that others can find similar positivity and joy within the space.

ii. Theme

1. Making

The process of making these ceramic forms provides relief for me. Making art is a meditative and physical process. The meditative aspects revolve around the idea of repeated action, allowing me to exist in the present moment and focus on what I am physically doing. This quote by Sir William Osler found in a book titled *The Sound of A Wild Snail Eating* by Elizabeth Tova Bailey (2010, Fig.2) has stuck with me throughout the construction of this work.

“Think not of the amount to be accomplished, the difficulties to be overcome, or the end to be attained, but set earnestly at the little task at your elbow, letting that be sufficient for the day.”¹

Each pinch, and movement of the clay at my hands to create these structures is the task that I set to accomplish each day. One at a time, these sculptures are put together, piece by hand-sized piece, to accumulate into a much larger quantity of work. It is an analog process of building by hand and showing every bit of labor that I exhaust on this work.

2. Environment

The second reason to make this artwork is the idea that at the end of all this hard work and labor, what is accumulated is a series of sculptures that I can surround myself with; effectively celebrating the work that I have put in through the last three years at West Virginia University. Surrounding myself in this body of work creates an environment that is inspired not only by this hard work, but also by things that I find engaging such as the bright colors, undulating forms, and repetitive patterns referenced in the work. I have created an installation that can provide an experience that brings myself, and hopefully other viewers into the present, and provide a way to mentally engage one with their surroundings. Many times, people go about their day on autopilot, not noticing what is around them. *Accumulation* (2020, Fig. 3) forces the viewer to pay attention, with loud colors, visual information to discover, and an environment to

¹ Elizabeth Tova Bailey, *The Sound Of A Wild Snail Eating*, 23.

be overwhelmed by.² The point is, when you are in this space, you are not thinking about your student debt, your worries about catching a virus or what you have to get from the grocery store. As a viewer, you are paying attention to what is in front of you, because it is loud, overwhelming, playful, and full of whimsy.

3. Accumulation

The word accumulation is defined as a collection of objects or information that has been increased gradually in quantity or number.³ Objects are gathered and placed together one by one. The definition also emphasizes an increase or growth by addition, especially when the addition is continuous or repeated.⁴ Repetition is emphasized, as many objects that are collected or accumulated are of a like-kind. The word Accumulation can be used in a variety of ways; to reference, the collection of objects, of information, people, wealth, precipitation, and many, many others.⁵ For the exhibition installation *Accumulation*, this title was chosen because it was applicable to the construction of the work, as well as the assembly of the final installation. Accumulation is referenced in the construction of the work because of the emphasis on repeated mark making and technique. The same coiled, flattened, and pinched marks are repeated over, and over again to accumulate into the final single structure. Additionally, the title *Accumulation* is in reference to the collection of these structures in the final installation, over time. The installation is not made of just one piece, but of an assembly of hundreds of structures

² Birren, Faber, *Color Psychology and Color Therapy: A Factual Study on the Influence of Color on the Human Life*, 2016.

³ *Accumulate*, Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2020.

⁴ *Accumulation*, Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2020.

⁵ Weiss, Allen S., *The Grain of Clay: Reflections on Ceramics and the Art of Collecting*, Reaction Books Ltd. London, UK, 2016.

accumulated together. These are modular and symbiotically cohabitate the space to create one large design.

4. Collecting

Collections are a part of each person's daily life. Whether we collect food in the pantry or clothes in the closet, at a minimum, each person collects at least one type of item over time. This item is repeatedly collected, placed together, and often revisited over one's lifetime. Personally, I collect a variety of things. These include visual art, house plants, fish, and rocks. I collect these because they bring me happiness, I like to care for living things, and because I like to surround myself in familiar objects. There are a variety of reasons that people collect different objects. One reason that objects are collected is that they bring happiness to a person in their life. Other reasons may be that they are visually appealing, or have some personal, situational, or familial importance. Some collections are a result of necessity, such as food or clothing. It is a very normal and often overlooked part of everyday life.

On the darker side of accumulation, the collecting of objects can sometimes get out of control. Collecting objects can be healthy, entertaining, and meaningful. However, it can also cross a line into over-collecting, and even into the realm of hoarding objects. Hoarding is defined as the practice of collecting or accumulating something but has a negative connotation in our society. It can even develop into a psychological disorder. Hoarding disorder is the compulsion to excessively save items that others may view as worthless or meaningless.⁶ Often hoarders have the inability to throw away these objects, and the objects are often random, without obvious meaning and are stored carelessly. Hoarding is not the same as collecting, and a few differences should be mentioned to differentiate the two. Collectors tend to look for specific items, such as

⁶ Parekh, Ranna, M.D., M.P.H. *What is Hoarding Disorder?* American Psychiatric Association, July, 2017.

stamps, buttons, or pottery, for example, and display them in a careful and organized way with pride.⁷ People with hoarding disorder tend to gather items regardless of their importance, and often there is a sentimentality associated with these items that may normally be regarded as meaningless. Additionally, the quantity of objects that hoarders gather tend to exceed that of collectors, and become a hindrance in their daily life, by physically blocking working or living spaces.⁸ In addition to hoarding disorder being a physical problem regarding organization and space, people with this disorder often have difficulty getting rid of these items, despite their lack of worth or meaning.⁹ It can cause great distress to throw things away or to donate them to others.

iii. Influences

The individual pieces are what I like to call structures. I apply terms to these structures, to categorize them based on their physical appearances. For example, I call the pieces built with curved and rounded coils “piles,” and the more grid-like structures “scaffolding.” Other materials beyond clay are introduced, such as fiber. Fiber filled “fuzzy” structures are spread throughout the installation. These names are an inventory of different methods of building, and materials, and a playful way to name the types of structures that I make. I am influenced by many, many things in my life, most of which I observe daily. I try to pay attention to what is around me and often find these patterns, shapes, or colors wiggling their way into my work. Nothing is off-limits, but some influences are stronger than others.

5. Micro-Environments

⁷ Parekh, Ranna, M.D., M.P.H. *What is Hoarding Disorder?* American Psychiatric Association, July 2017.

⁸ Parekh, Ranna, M.D., M.P.H. *What is Hoarding Disorder?* American Psychiatric Association, July 2017.

⁹ Parekh, Ranna, M.D., M.P.H. *What is Hoarding Disorder?* American Psychiatric Association, July 2017.

One such influence includes the environments we find ourselves living in. These exist in spaces like my apartment and the fish tanks that I keep. All of these are micro-environments designed to create a certain feeling. In my apartment, I surround myself with things that I love, such as plants, fish tanks, bright colors, artwork, and soft surfaces because these things make me relax, and prompt happiness. I am an avid fish-keeper and spend time decorating my tanks with plants, ceramic structures, floral elements, and other things. The bright, playful quality that these decorations have in reference to real-life things, including coral, and underwater botany (Fig. 4). These micro-environments directly relate to the environment created by *Accumulation*. Though I do not see coral on an everyday basis, I do see the aquarium reproductions that they inspire. This installation is one large terrestrial environment built just for me, and the viewers I share it with.

6. Architecture

Another visual reference that I utilize in my work is architecture. As a person on this earth, I am exposed to architecture daily. The environment we exist in when we go outside consists of all kinds of architecture that we must navigate around and through. Different buildings in Morgantown, West Virginia, buildings I saw growing up in Ohio, and my travels to different cities and locations all play into what I am creating. I spend a lot of my time walking around wherever I am living and soaking in visual information about what is around me. For example, driving back and forth from my undergraduate institution in Bowling Green, Ohio, I would pass a power plant every time. The cooling tower from this plant has visually made its way into some of my structures (Fig. 5). So has the gridded trim I saw on my grandmother's back porch growing up, and on the trellises that held up her plants. Additionally, the city skylines I have seen in my travels serve as a reference (Fig. 6). The importance of these architectural

elements lies in observation and my repeated visual exposure to them, not necessarily in their actual function.

7. Gardening

The third main influence I have is gardening and plants. Another type of environment that people create is in the garden. These can be chaotic and overgrown, or carefully organized by color, type, and size. I grew up gardening outside all the time, and it has been a constant influence on my art. Colors, shapes, and patterns are extracted from botanical influences and inserted into my installation *Accumulation*. Specifically, the bright colors from flowers in the springtime, such as tulips, daffodils, and crocuses, that bring me so much joy, are present in the work (Fig. 7). Additionally, I reference fractal patterns found in trees as well as in gardening trellises (Fig. 8). *Accumulation* is arranged much like I would arrange a garden, taking care to give each piece what it needs to survive, and arranging them while keeping in mind relationships between color, type, and size.

iv. The Process of Making

8. Gesture and Abstract Expressionism

The body of work *Accumulation* emphasizes the process of making, provides evidence of the artist's hand and shows how the work is created and put together. There is no attempt to hide this fabrication process, only to embrace it. The process of making serves as a meditative practice in my life. It releases energy through the application of physical work. It provides an opportunity to funnel mental and physical energy through my hands and through my body. This release of energy is transferred as gesture into the ceramic sculptures. Each mark that my hands make is evidence of this release of energy. No extra aesthetic marks are made on the surfaces, just functional marks of pinching and squishing the clay, to develop the structure of the

sculpture. These functional marks serve as a product of my physical energy applied onto the surface of the clay. They are made permanent through the process of firing the clay into ceramics. As a result, the marks that my hands make, and the history of this application of energy will live on beyond the time that I am alive.

This energetic exchange can also be seen in the existential mark-making of the Abstract Expressionists.¹⁰ Beginning in the 1940s, primarily in New York, the artists known as the Abstract Expressionists emerged. These artists emphasized the presence and use of the artists' hands and the idea of an existential mark. The Abstract Expressionists thought that the existential mark would serve as a way for the artist to live on in their artwork past the time of their demise. These artists included Joan Mitchell (1925-1992), Helen Frankenthaler (1928–2011) and many others.¹¹ To varying degrees, I find inspiration from these artists in my work. The emphasis on abstract expressionism is dynamic, energetic gesture, abstract stylization, and intuitive mark-making.¹² These artists were from varying backgrounds but shared the conviction that art must express universal truths generated by deeply personal inner experiences.¹³ The sculptures I create are made of simple marks and techniques, including coils and slabs. I combine these repetitively and intuitively, pinching and moving clay around with a similar functional gesture that the abstract expressionists utilize in their painterly work.

v. Materials and Methods

9. Sculptures

¹⁰ Anfam, David, *Abstract Expressionism*, 1990.

¹¹ Stella Paul, "Abstract Expressionism," *In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, 2004.

¹² Stella Paul, "Abstract Expressionism"

¹³ Lisa Mintz Messinger, *Abstract Expressionism, Works on Paper*, ix.

I use clay as a primary material in my three-dimensional sculptural work because it can receive these energetic marks from my hands. It is a malleable and plastic material, which makes it both forgiving, but with an excellent memory for mark-making. It is also responsive and provides a challenge; testing patience and gravity in building these scaffolding based structures. The plasticity of the clay lets it stretch and move with the movements of my fingers and tools and fully allows the surface of the clay to remember these marks and this transfer of energy. Clay also provides an opportunity to move rapidly through one or more sculptures at a time, letting my energy level dictate the amount of making that occurs at a time. I use primarily low-fire white stoneware clay, glazed, and fired to cone 04. This clay body provides a white surface upon which gesso or paint can be applied to finish the-sculptures. It avoids the need for the application of an additional primer, such as a white slip, gesso, or paint primer. This clay was chosen, and modified, as well because of its low talc content to avoid expansion issues relating to application. Additionally, nylon fibers, sand, and varying sizes of grog are added to the clay to assist with expansion and malleability. Many clays were tested in this process, but this served as the most successful of the clay bodies to work with for this method of making.

This three-dimensional work is created using a simple slab and coil building technique. Coils are rolled out, and flattened with the palm of a hand, or combined in their original coiled form. These are created by intuitively and repetitively attaching different combinations of coils and flattened coil slabs together. The forms of these objects reference the line or mark present in abstract expressionism, as well as other two-dimensional work. They begin a discussion between positive and negative space, the positive space being the sculptural object, and the negative space existing as all of the space in-between and around the sculptural object. The negative spaces

allow forms to appear behind the object. This creates a dialogue between the linear quality of the sculpture and the shapes created in the negative space.

10. Coiling

The process used to create these sculptures is simple and repetitive but requires thorough knowledge of the material, and time and respect for the rules of gravity. I coil this white stoneware clay into long snake-like coils. I then flatten them using the palm of my hand and combine them together, layer by layer. The base of the scaffolding structures is started with an L-shaped coil, flattened with my hands, on both the horizontal and vertical planes. Next, round, non-flat coils are rolled and folded over this horizontal band in a vertical fashion and pinched upwards. The pinch marks remain in the clay and holds vertical coil safely and firmly to the horizontal coil. Many of these vertical coils are attached to the L-shaped base. Another long coil or series of long coils are rolled, pounded flat, and wrapped around the exterior of the vertical coils. This coil wraps completely around the original L-shaped base dictating the general shape of this first horizontal band. Another set of vertical coils are attached and pinched upwards, dictating the direction that the vessel will expand or contract on a horizontal plane. This is repeated, and so on, and so forth until a point has been reached to my satisfaction. The pieces vary in size, shape, and form but tend to maintain a verticality, referencing the growth of a tree or a plant upwards and outwards. The piece ends when I decide it is finished and satisfies an inner need for this meditative making process in myself. The size of the kiln also assists in dictating how large these sculptures can ultimately be made and provides parameters in which each section of a sculpture must work. Each piece tends to end with a row of vertical, pinched coils reaching upwards, or outwards away from the bulk of the structure, referencing leaves reaching from the tips of a tree, or fingers and toes reaching out from the body of a person. This

also indicates the potential of growth and emphasizes the idea that these sculptures could continue upwards into infinity as time passes. If two or more of these structures are constructed and combined to make a larger form, templates to measure the base and top of the two structures are used to begin the base coil of each sculpture so that they can be combined at a horizontal joint that meets up accurately.

11. Modularity

Modularity in these sculptures is useful. Making sculptures in parts allows for ease of transportation, as well as assembly. Parts can be combined and sometimes interchanged with other components of different sculptures, if templates are used that provide a matching counterpart. This interchangeable nature provides an opportunity for adjustment of the sculptures post-firing to assemble and reassemble them in different combinations. The interchangeable pieces reference building blocks used in man-made architecture. It also references building blocks used by children, including Legos, wooden blocks, and other stacking materials. These sculptural stacks are assembled together and then combined in large installations with other modular stacks. The individual pieces, as well as installations, are like puzzle games, that the assembler must figure out. This provides some change, challenge, and humor every time the pieces are installed, adding the potential for shared authorship as the pieces are assembled in different ways. Shared authorship is a technique used both in Minimalism and Process Art movements. This concept applies when an installation or sculpture can change depending upon who installs it, and the option for different installers is provided so that the installation can change upon each decision to assemble it.

12. Surface

The surfaces of my sculptures are prepared using a matte clear glaze or the raw white, fired stoneware clay, to provide a canvas for the application of paint onto the structures. The many glaze recipes tested were narrowed down to one main recipe, which is comprised of three ingredients; gerstley borate, silica, and whiting in equal parts. Alone, this glaze appears as a thick, matte, milky white surface with mild crazing, and is juicy, and thick. As a base coat, the glaze holds the application of spray paint well. On top of the glazed or drier clay surface, the materials used to create depth of the surface, and the application of color include house paint, acrylic paint, and aerosol spray paint. Using both glaze and bare clay as a base surface offers variety and allows for different surface textures. Layers of this paint and glaze provide a rich, deep, and varied surface for these sculptures. Primarily I use aerosol spray paint because of the ease of acquisition and application, and the abundance of colors that are available. These colors tend to also dictate a palette to work within, each color appearing on not just one sculpture, but many in a single installation. Though my color choices are limited, they span the color wheel.¹⁴ This application of repeated or varied color allows the eye to move through the larger installation, following color changes (Fig. 10). The painted color lies under layers of additional clear sealant, enriching the surface of the sculptural objects, and providing the depth of surface for the eye to be drawn to. The layers of glaze, paint, and sealant provide a rich surface with more depth than just spray paint could provide on its own.

vi. Materials

Material has been an important decision in creating the work in *Accumulation*. I have used primarily fired ceramics in this installation. It is a material that I can pound, pinch, squish, and

¹⁴ *Color: A Practical Guide to Color and its Uses in Art*, Quarto Publishing Group, Lake Forest, CA. 2017.

feel with my bare hands (Fig. 11). This is important to me because I can be directly involved in the making of my work. I am not separated by tools or other methods from the clay. I use my hands to embrace the act of making as a tactile experience. I work out my emotions on the clay, whether it is happiness and joy, anger and frustration, or even sadness or neutrality. The repetition of touching something with my hands to exude physical energy on it makes it an intimate, and present experience. Additionally, clay has a vivid memory. It remembers every laugh, tear, or forgetful mark that is placed on it, so making with the intention to combine one hand-sized piece of clay to another is the way I apply myself to these objects.

13. Color

Other materials are used in addition to the fired ceramics. I chose to use spray paint instead of glaze on these pieces for a few reasons. The first is my familiarity with paint as a material. Second, is the extensive color palette that paint can provide, and the ability to use brighter colors with more consistency (Fig. 12). Color is an important component of the work in *Accumulation*. I have chosen colors that I find personally to create an environment full of fun that is saturated, and playful. I have ascribed colors to the structures in a relatively arbitrary fashion, having a variety of colors on each type of form, as well as exchanging colors between forms. Often my color choices depend on my mood on the day that I am painting the object. I have placed them in the installation so that the colored structures act with a language of mark-making, like you would find in a painting using brush strokes. Different colors draw the viewers' eye, and even body around the installation such as an orange leading to another orange across the room, or a red brightening the green next to it. Different components of basic color theory are applied in my installation, including relationships between primary and secondary colors, complementary color schemes, as well as analogous colors. The objects are placed in the space,

so they conduct the viewer in a designated path around the space, much like a painter moves paint around a canvas.

14. Clay and Fiber

In *Accumulation*, I embraced clay as a sculptural medium. Additionally, I used fibers on these structures (Fig. 13). Mostly yarn and string-like fibers were used to create an additional texture opportunity, as well as more whimsy and playfulness. The fibers are also a nod to the idea of certain craft materials being considered woman's work. As a woman, it has been an adventure of discovery into some of these materials. An additional nod to women's work was some research into basket-making forms that has come out visually through the forms and grid-like patterns in my work to create individual objects. Clay was essential in the making of this installation. It has tactile qualities that cannot be reproduced using other mediums. It is inviting, quiet, and approachable. In the end, other sculptural materials could be utilized to create an environment such as this. However the process of making, touching, and physical labor would be absent from the end product that is so well provided through the use of clay.

vii. Art Movements in Reference.

15. Minimalism.

Minimalism is a strong reference in the body of work *Accumulation*. It is an art movement that emerged at the end of the 1950s as a reaction to the energy and busyness of Abstract Expressionism and is characterized by artworks that

“assert the primacy of the object itself, and the importance of the object for the viewer unmediated by the artist”¹⁵.

¹⁵ John A. Parks, *Universal Principles of Art, 100 Key Concepts for Understanding, Analyzing, and Practicing Art*, Beverly, MA., 2015.

Minimalists assert that the object itself just exists as the object, but not in direct reference to any other objects. The object does not serve as a stand-in, but just exists to exist. Additionally, Minimalist artwork serves to exist without an elaborate back story that the artist must explain to each new viewer of the piece, such as conceptual art. In the case of minimalism, the pieces can communicate with the viewer at their own pace and accord, without a further explanation in the form of speech, written statement, or packaged information. Minimalism is more about the relationship of the artist to the objects, and of the viewer to the objects in the space, in real-time

There are many artists who make minimalist work in some aspect, several of whom help to inspire the work that I make. These include Frank Stella (1936-), and Donald Judd (1928-1994) among many others (Fig. 14). Minimalist artists also tend to use simple geometric shapes and forms, primary colors and atypical art materials,¹⁶ such as concrete, clay, aluminum, etc. These materials avoid provoking traditional responses from the viewer, such as an oil painting or steel fabricated sculpture could do. Additionally, Minimalism emphasizes the repetition of simple elements in rows or grids and avoids suggestion of hierarchy, compositional balance or meaning.¹⁷ In the work *Accumulation*, I utilize this technique and emphasize repetition in the form of a grid pattern. By repeating horizontal, and then vertical coils, I utilize these techniques of grid, balance, and hierarchy. Minimalist artist Donald Judd once said

“The parts of an artwork should just be one thing after another.”¹⁸

I also find this statement to be very personal to my work. The clay coils that I roll out are added to my sculptures, one after another, to repeat a pattern over and over. This is done visually

¹⁶ John A. Parks, *Universal Principles of Art, 100 Key Concepts for Understanding, Analyzing, and Practicing Art*, Beverly, MA., 2015.

¹⁷ John A. Parks, *Universal Principles of Art, 100 Key Concepts for Understanding, Analyzing, and Practicing Art*, Beverly, MA., 2015.

¹⁸ John A. Parks, *Universal Principles of Art, 100 Key Concepts for Understanding, Analyzing, and Practicing Art*. Beverly, MA., 2015.

but also within my behavior as a maker. I create a coil, flatten it, assemble a layer of the structure, and repeat it. My work differs from Minimalism, in that Minimalist art often does not display the touch or hand of the artist. Minimalism emphasizes flat painting techniques, mechanically ruled edges and lines, as well as industrial techniques of fabrication to avoid the possibility of a physical trace of the artist.¹⁹ My work *Accumulation* does not follow this last rule of minimalism, and instead emphasizes the presence of my hand in the work, breaking the pattern.

16. Abstract Expressionism

The emphasis of the hand in my work relates it back to an earlier movement; Abstract Expressionism. This movement emerged in New York after World War II and occurred primarily in the 1950s and 60s. One early example is Herold Rosenberg's "Action Painting", where artists

"theatrically expressed their personal anguish on a blank canvas with little attention to form, style and subject matter."²⁰

In addition to this action painting, Abstract Expressionism also emphasizes gesture and intuitive mark-making and capturing the artist's existential mark.²¹ I relate to Abstract Expressionism in my work because of this existential, gestural mark. The presence of the hand is essential in Abstract Expressionism, as it is in my work. I want to leave an imprint of my hand and my fingers with each pinch and squeeze of the clay. As a result, these marks, and this transference of my energy into the clay will live on well beyond my lifetime.

a. Joan Mitchell

¹⁹ John A. Parks, *Universal Principles of Art, 100 Key Concepts for Understanding, Analyzing, and Practicing Art*. Beverly, MA., 2015.

²⁰ Polcari, Stephen, "Abstract Expressionism: "New and Improved,"" *Art Journal* 47, No. 3 (1988): 174.

²¹ Stella Paul, "Abstract Expressionism," *In Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History*, 2004.

Within Abstract Expressionism, I have been focusing primarily on painters. One such painter is Joan Mitchell (1925-1992). Her Abstract Expressionist paintings serve as a source of reference for my work in several different ways. She began drawing loosely and impulsively with a brush around 1951.²² Her marks with the paintbrush are gestural and energetic (Fig. 15). Mitchell's approach is straightforward and direct: she uses a specific brush to apply a particular color. As she moves across the canvas, she changes the brush, color, and viscosity of the paint. At no point does she scrape down or rub out what she has done. She goes forward without circling back.²³ Mitchell committed to the marks she placed on the canvas and didn't modify or overthink them. In addition to committed gestural marks, I find another relationship between Mitchell's work and my work *Accumulation* in the large immersive scale. Mitchell's paintings are very large, sometimes much more than 100 inches in height or width which allows the viewer to enter into the environment that the grand sized painting creates and feel surrounded by it. This feeling of being surrounded is similar to the installation *Accumulation*, as the goal is to create an immersive space that envelops the viewer.

b. Helen Frankenthaler

Helen Frankenthaler is another Abstract Expressionist painter who inspires the work in the exhibition *Accumulation*. Frankenthaler lived from 1928 to 2011. Her career as a painter spanned six decades. Frankenthaler's first solo show was held in New York City in 1951. In one of her major early works, the *Mountains and Sea* (1952), she created diaphanous color by means of thinned-down oils that she allowed to soak into the raw (unprimed) canvas (Fig. 16). This technique, known as the stain technique, strongly contrasted with the use of impasto that

²² John Yau, *The Joan Mitchell You've Never Seen*, Hyperallergic Magazine, 2019.

²³ John Yau, *The Joan Mitchell You've Never Seen*, Hyperallergic Magazine, 2019.

characterized most Abstract Expressionist painting, and it seriously influenced the color-field painters Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland.²⁴ Similar to Joan Mitchell, Frankenthaler's work is made at a large scale, and invites the viewer to enter into the composition. In addition to this immersive quality, I also draw inspiration from the vibrant color palette that Frankenthaler uses in her early work, especially in the 1950s. Her color choices are softer than those used in Mitchell's work, or my own, but share an equal variety of vibrant, saturated colors.

17. Non-Ceramic Contemporary Artists

c. Yayoi Kusama

Yayoi Kusama was born in Japan in 1929 and began her career at the Kyoto Municipal School of Arts and Crafts. Kusama's work began a shift into creating installation-based environments in the mid-1960s.²⁵ In the 1950s she started a trend in her work of including polka dots as components of her artwork.²⁶ These were used in paintings, sculptures and Happenings. This has carried through to her most recent work created as well. Kusama has struggled with her mental health throughout her life. In 1977 she moved into a mental hospital after a nervous breakdown.²⁷ She has been living in this place for the last forty years and continues to use it as her home base in Japan. Her work expresses these events by discussing

“decades of raging struggles with precarious mental balance, gender, ethnicity, money, power, class, self-mythology, annihilation, life and death, peppered with a bit of wonder.”²⁸

The struggles she has had as a female artist in the mid-1900s as well as being a Japanese woman in the United States have had a large impact on her artwork. Additionally, she became a

²⁴ “Helen Frankenthaler: American Painter”, *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, March 4, 2020

²⁵ *Art Since 1945*, Allen Memorial Art Museum, www.amam.com

²⁶ Ellen Pearlman, *The Long Strange Art Of Yayoi Kusama*, Hyperallergic

²⁷ Ellen Pearlman, *The Long Strange Art of Yayoi Kusama*, Hyperallergic.

²⁸ Ellen Pearlman, *The Long Strange Art of Yayoi Kusama*, Hyperallergic.

prominent artist in the 1950s and 80s, while the second wave of feminism was hitting the United States. Kusama's *Obliteration Room* (2012) (Fig. 17) discusses the obliteration of the self, and the fear of losing one's self.²⁹ The obliteration of the self and her childhood fears are repeating elements in her work. She is driven by a compulsion to repeat patterns and surround herself in them. By doing this, she creates environments into which she can escape from the burden of her everyday reality. Kusama is immersing herself in her art to soothe her psyche, and hopefully the psyche of the viewers.

d. Sarah Sze

Sarah Sze is another installation artist that inspires the work *Accumulation*. She also works to create environments that surround and immerse the viewer in her work. She is an artist from Boston, Massachusetts, who works in multiple mediums. Sze often uses moving parts and live plants in her work, balancing whimsy and ecological themes of interconnectivity and sustainability to create her installation environments.³⁰ She additionally references the cities and structures that surround people in their everyday lives. She draws from what is around her and uses a combination of fabricated and found objects to create these complex installations. One example of such work is her piece titled *Triple Point (Pendulum)* (2013) (Fig. 18). This piece is a large sculptural environment that the observer can enter and be surrounded by. Sze uses many mixed media materials in this piece, including mirrors, wood, bamboo, steel, pigment, ceramics, projectors, and much more. Sarah Sze was originally a painter and evidence of this skill set is transferred to her sculptural work as well. Sze speaks on how she borrows "color, mark, and

²⁹ Brendan L. Smith, *Obliterating the Self in the Infinity Mirrors of Yayoi Kusama*, The Washington Diplomat, April 3, 2017.

³⁰ Sarah Sze, Art 21.

composition (from painting) to inform my sculpture, as well as scale, circulation, and utility from architecture.”³¹ This is another relationship that I relate to, through the combination of two-dimensional mediums on three-dimensional surfaces in my own work.

18. Contemporary Ceramic Artists

In addition to being inspired by many Modern and Contemporary art theories and movements, I am also incredibly inspired by many contemporary ceramic artists. These artists work in a similar medium, use similar techniques, or tackle similar themes. They are primarily sculptural, or installation based and addresses the environment, time, and many other concerns. I have narrowed down the list of artists to those working in similar coil-built or modular techniques to the work in *Accumulation*. The artists discussed below include Peter Christian Johnson, Linda Lopez, Albert Pfarr, And Yoonjee Kwak. Coil based hand-building has a long history in the ceramic arts, these artists have all expanded upon this technique to embrace the negative space between these coils.

e. Peter Christian Johnson

Another artistic influence on the work *Accumulation* is Peter Christian Johnson, a fine artist currently serving as an assistant professor of ceramics at Kent State University in Kent, Ohio. Many references find their way into Peter Christian Johnson’s ceramic work. Some of these include architecture, including churches, homes, and bridges.³² This carries over into my own work *Accumulation* through the inspiration I find in architectural forms. He is inspired not only by these structures, but by the warping and deconstruction that time has on these structures. As the kiln applies heat, the porcelain architectural structures are allowed to warp and change in

³¹ Louise Neri. *Sarah Sze: Infinite Generation*, Gagosian Quarterly, Winter 2018, Gagosian.com

³² Peter Christian Johnson, Eutectic Gallery of Contemporary Ceramics, 2019, www.eutecticgallery.com

the kiln. This alteration references how real-life man-made structures can change and decompose over time. Johnson uses the kiln as a vehicle for destruction.³³ This movement emphasizes entropy over the passage of time. Johnson uses a porcelain clay body that is mechanically extruded and assembled in a grid pattern.³⁴ One such example is the piece *Preludes* (2016) (Fig. 19) as a part of the body of work titled *Poise* that was created in 2016.³⁵ This use of an extruder and a bright white material creates cold, clinical marks, void of the artists' hand. The pieces are fired just hot enough to allow the porcelain grid structure to move, melt, and change a small amount.³⁶ The glaze is incredibly viscous and is allowed to drip down the frame of the architectural pieces to pool within the grid, on top of the pieces, and on the bottom of the structures.

f. Albert Pfarr

Another contemporary ceramic artist that inspires the work that I make is Albert Pfarr. Albert Pfarr is a Brooklyn, New York-based artist known for

"large-scale, free standing ceramic sculptures composed of hundreds of interconnecting and interchangeable parts that draw inspiration from patterns of construction in both nature and technology".³⁷

Pfarr's work is made up of hundreds of pieces that are combined to create a single structure (Fig. 20). Pfarr uses a peg and hole fabrication technique and combines spines, flanges and loops into a cylindrical terra cotta or earthenware core structure that is full of holes.³⁸ The results are modular, non-representational forms that develop organically, and spontaneously

³³ Peter Christian Johnson, Eutectic Gallery of Contemporary Ceramics, 2019, www.eutecticgallery.com

³⁴ Peter Christian Johnson, *Peter Christian Johnson*, 2019, www.peterchristianjohnson.com

³⁵ Peter Christian Johnson, *Artaxis*, 2019, www.artaxis.com

³⁶ Peter Christian Johnson, *Peter Christian Johnson*, 2019, www.peterchristianjohnson.com

³⁷ *Walter Gropius Master Artist Series Presents: Albert Pfarr*, Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington, WV., 2014, www.hmoa.org

³⁸ *Walter Gropius Master Artist Series Presents: Albert Pfarr*, Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington, WV., 2014. www.hmoa.org

through the combinations of ceramic components. Pfarr's work has a scale and sheer physicality that can be perceived by a viewer as intimidating and otherworldly, yet there is enough familiarity relating the work to flowers, toys, or three-dimensional doodles that

"engages and delights the viewer".³⁹

The connection to three dimensional doodles is one that I really enjoy in Pfarr's work. I relate it back to my own work, specifically through the combinations of two-dimensional and three-dimensional elements in the wall work in the *Accumulation* installation.

Pfarr often reuses components from one sculpture and combines them with the other components to create an entirely new sculpture once the first reaches its time of retirement. These objects are recycled into "entirely different configurations."⁴⁰ This modularity allows for this recombination, as well as the possibility for shared authorship, as each person assembling one of Pfarr's sculptures could cause an alteration or change as the object is constructed in a new location or new way. The body of work *Accumulation* relates to Pfarr's work directly because of these modular components, and because of the ability to restack or recombine different pieces to create a new iteration of a piece. This modularity is also another reference to Minimalism in the history of art. Modular units allow for ease of installation and for the viewer to be overwhelmed by the components of the sculpture. Post-firing construction; or combining elements after the clay has been fired into ceramic, also allows for the ceramics to defy the obstacles that building with clay usually has with gravity as well as time and patience.

g. Linda Lopez

³⁹ *Walter Gropius Master Artist Series Presents: Albert Pfarr*, Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington, WV., 2014, www.hmoa.org

⁴⁰ *Walter Gropius Master Artist Series Presents: Albert Pfarr*, Huntington Museum of Art, Huntington, WV., 2014, www.hmoa.org

Another ceramic artist who influences my exhibition *Accumulation* is Linda Lopez. She is a ceramic artist born in 1981 in California. Lopez received a Bachelor of Fine arts in Ceramics, a Bachelor of Arts in Art Education from California State University of Chico, and a Master of Fine Arts from the University of Colorado at Boulder in Ceramics.⁴¹ Lopez has shown in the United States as well as New Zealand, and she has been a resident artist at the Clay Studio in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania as well as the Archie Bray Foundation in Helena, Montana.⁴² Lopez creates work that is primarily ceramic and is a well-known maker and educator in the ceramic community. She constructs her ceramic objects in a physical way, through direct manipulation of the clay,⁴³ often using repeated patterns to create textures, including repeated coils, slabs, or tubes (Fig. 21). Lopez also repeats patterns as surface treatments, including dots, stripes, and other simple repetitive patterns. She creates structures out of clay that have an extreme amount of variety in form, pattern, texture, and building style. Her coiled work is specifically interesting to me, in relation to the body of work *Accumulation*. The repetitive way that Lopez works references scaffolding, as well as architectural structures, such as buildings. This leads to work created with coils to make a loose, gestural structure with much negative space between the clay parts. These works are often seen as individual pieces but are also be formed into installations.

h. Yoonjee Kwak

Yoonjee Kwak is another artist who influences my work. I had the pleasure of working with her during a summer program in 2019 and found her repetitive method of working to be

⁴¹ Linda Lopez, Artaxis, 2019, www.artaxis.org

⁴² Linda Lopez, Artaxis, 2019, www.artaxis.org

⁴³ Linda Lopez and Matthew McConnell: *Fellowship Artists*, The Greenwich House Gallery, 2017, www.greenwichhouse.org

relatable and inspiring. Kwak creates sculptural ceramic vessels, discussing the topics of minimalism, nature, and geometry.⁴⁴ She uses a hand-building technique that involves pinching bits of coiled clay together (Fig. 22). Kwak discusses the technique as a way to document her slow and meaningful practice, and record each mark, memory and bit of patience put into her work over time.⁴⁵ I relate to this greatly in my own work, through the idea of using the process of making as a form of meditation.⁴⁶ Additionally, I relate to her emphasis on mark-making being an important part in documenting the artists' hand. I employ this technique in my own work and use the clay to capture each and every mark that my hands apply to the surface.

viii. Exhibition

The work *Accumulation* was installed in the Laura Mesaros Gallery at West Virginia University through the end of March and beginning of April of 2020. The work was brought in the gallery piece by piece and gathered in the center of the room. The work was arranged like an outdoor flower garden, with special emphasis on color, type, and size. The tallest pieces stand at the height of ten feet, and the smallest pieces at only one inch (Fig. 23). The tallest and largest pieces were placed in various parts of the room. The second tallest groupings of sculptures, standing at around four feet were placed next, complimenting the disbursement of the tallest structures. The placement of these larger objects decided where the thickest masses of structures were to be accumulated. The medium and small objects were then placed around, within, and on top of the taller structures to create fullness within the masses of objects. Finally, the more varied structures, including those covered in fiber, bold metallic surfaced objects, and glittered objects

⁴⁴ Yoonjee Kwak, Artaxis, Artaxis.com 2018

⁴⁵ Yoonjee Kwak, Artaxis, Artaxis.com 2018

⁴⁶ Moon, Catherine Hyland, *Studio Art Therapy: Cultivating the Artist Identity in the Art Therapist*, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, UK., 2002.

were strategically hidden around the installation as small variations for the viewer to find (Fig. 24). The objects were arranged, rearranged, and rearranged again to create the fullest and most varied groupings of objects.

In addition to creating masses of accumulated objects, I found it important to allow the viewer to feel really surrounded by the objects. To do this, I organized the groupings of objects around a meandering path (Fig. 25). This path is similar to one found in a garden, or even in a small outdoor maze. This path allows the viewer to walk through the objects and become part of the depths of the installation. There is additional room to view the sculptures from the exterior of the mass, as more of an outsider looking into a sculptural garden space (Fig. 26). Allowing the viewer to be both inside of the space and outside of the space was important to me. The path through the installation allows the viewer to be surrounded by a variety of repetitive, saturated objects of varying heights and textures. The path is tight but can be entered by an average sized person comfortably. As one moves through the installation, the path widens and there is enough space to sit down within the installation, and really be overwhelmed by the height, size, and quantity of what is surrounding you.

As the viewer enters the gallery, they can see the installation as a large, saturated, colorful, busy, and overwhelming mass. They move down the ramp and enter to the right of the installation. As they descend to the lower floor of the gallery, the sculptural installation grows with proximity, and the height of the larger pieces is realized. Entering the gallery provides four options. Two options are to move around the exterior of the gallery either clockwise or counterclockwise. The next two options are to move through the interior of the grouping of structures along the path provided. The viewer can either walk through clockwise or counterclockwise. Nearly everyone who entered the gallery during the exhibition took the

counterclockwise route through the interior of the space, and then secondly circled around the exterior in a counterclockwise motion. However, there were some exceptions. The right side of the path faces towards the ramp descending from the entrance of the gallery and is the first one noticed, and visually entered as a result (Fig. 27). Most viewers spent time in the middle of the installation path, moving back and forth and looking at objects from all sides, before exiting the installation and taking the external route. Time is spent searching for smaller objects, and objects deviating from the repetitive patterns. Additionally, viewers identify a relationship between their own size and the size of the work (Fig. 28). The reactions of the individuals that entered the gallery included excitement, wonder, overwhelm, overstimulation, and large smiles.

ix. Conclusion

In conclusion, the body of work *Accumulation* is an installation designed to allow for an escape from the difficulties of everyday life. Viewers enter the fabricated, imaginative environment to encounter mixed media ceramic sculptures. These pieces are assembled together to resemble a garden or landscape of unnatural structures (Fig. 29). These structures refer to scaffolding, trellises, architecture, and other natural and man-made structures. These also reference organized gardens and growth. The installation is whimsical and playful and aims to elicit a positive response from the viewer as they enter the space. *Accumulation* was designed as a personal experience, but I hope to share it with others. Additionally, I aim to share and celebrate the proud work that I have put in over the last three years at West Virginia University.

Image List.

Figure 1. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 2. Elisabeth Tova Bailey. *The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating*. Book Cover. Books-a-Million. Reproduced from <https://www.booksamillion.com/p/Sound-Wild-Snail-Eating/Elisabeth-Tova-Bailey/Q343915874> (Accessed April 17, 2020).

Figure. 3. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation (Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x18 ft.2020.

Figure 4. Fish Tank. Micro Environment Example. Photograph. Reproduced from <https://www.pinterest.com/pin/308496643222935495/> (Accessed April 17, 2020).

Figure 5. Davis Besse Nuclear Power Station. Ottawa County, Ohio. Reproduced from <https://www.toledoblade.com/local/2018/01/25/FirstEnergy-executive-Davis-Besse-plant-headed-for-premature-closure.html> (Accessed on April 17,2020).

Figure 6. Cleveland, Ohio City Skyline. Cleveland, Ohio. Reproduced from <https://www.thousandwonders.net/Cleveland> (Accessed on April 17, 2020).

Figure 7. Flower Garden Diagram. Michigan Bulb. Reproduced from https://www.michiganbulb.com/product/beginners-endless-bloom-perennial-garden66901?p=0845786&msclkid=c29eeaf1743f17f16416b46b6fd2707a&utm_source=bing&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Bing%20Shopping%20Ads%20-%20Product%20Listing%20Ads&utm_term=4577473067260151&utm_content=All%20Product%20Groups%20-%20Custom%20Label%202 (Accessed April 17, 2020).

Figure 8. Trellis Images. Lowes. 2020. Reproduced from <https://www.lowes.com/pd/Dura-Trel-58-in-W-x-94-in-H-White-Traditional-Garden-Trellis/1000785736> (Accessed April 17, 2020).

Figure 9. Children's building blocks, wooden. Reproduced from https://www.babycenter.com/0_lets-play-my-photo-album-block-that-move_1498464.bc (Accessed April 17, 2020).

Figure 10. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation*. (Detail). Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 11. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation.(Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 12. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation.(Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 13. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation.*(Detail). Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 14. Donald Judd. *Untitled.* Mnuching Gallery. Tom Powel Imaging, Inc. Copywrite Judd Foundation. Licensed by VAGA, New York, NY. Reproduced from <http://www.mnuchingallery.com/exhibitions/donald-judd>. (Accessed April 18, 2020).

Figure 15. Joan Mitchell. *Ici*. 1992. Oil on Canvas. Diptych: 102 3/8 x 157 1/2 Inches. David Zwirner Gallery. Reproduced from <https://www.davidzwirner.com/news/bma-and-sfmoma-announce-major-joan-mitchell-retrospective>. (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 16. Helen Frankenthaler. *Mountains and Sea*. 1952. Oil on Canvas. Copywrite Estate of Helen Frankenthaler/Artist Rights Society. New York. Reproduced from <http://artobserved.com/2013/04/new-york-city-helen-frankenthaler-painted-on-21st-street-at-gagosian-gallery-through-april-15th-2013/> (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 17. Yayoi Kusama. *The Obliteration Room*. 2012. White interior environment, colored stickers. Reproduced from <https://inspirationalgeek.wordpress.com/tag/yayoi-kusama/> (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 18. Sarah Sze. *Triple Point (Pendulum)*. 2013. Mixed Media. Reproduced from <https://magazine.columbia.edu/article/review-sarah-sze-triple-point> (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 19 Peter Christian Johnson. *Preludes*. 2016. Ceramics. Reproduced from <https://artaxis.org/peter-christian-johnson/> (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 20. Albert Pfarr. *For Underlige Mursten (Strange Brick.)* 2013. Ceramics. Reproduced from <https://www.hmoa.org/art/exhibition/walter-gropius-master-artist-series-presents-albert-pfarr> (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 21. Linda Lopez. *And To Think It All Started With That*. 2011. Ceramics and Wood. Reproduced from <https://artaxis.org/linda-lopez/#jp-carousel-4869> (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 22. Yoonjee Kwak. *Shy Woman Vessel*. 2018. Hand-built earthenware, gold. Reproduced from <https://artaxis.org/yoonjee-kwak/#jp-carousel-24426> (Accessed on April 18, 2020).

Figure 23. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation.(Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 24. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation.(Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 25. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation*.(Detail). Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 26. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation* (Detail). Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 27. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation (Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 28. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation (Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

Figure 29. Erin McCarty. *Accumulation (Detail)*. Ceramics and Mixed Media Installation. 10x20x25 ft. 2020

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Resume

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- 2020 **MFA**, Ceramics. West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
2017 **Study abroad**, Ceramics in China, Jingdezhen, China. West Virginia University
2016 -17 **Post-Baccalaureate Study**, The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN
2016 **BFA**, Painting and Drawing. Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH
2015 **Study abroad**, Studio Art Centers International, Florence, Italy.

HONORS AND GRANTS

- 2020 **Faculty/Student Mentored Research Exhibit**, Honorable Mention. West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
2018-20 **Graduate Teaching Assistantship**, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
2017-20 **Graduate Tuition Waiver**, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
2017 **Travel Award**, Study abroad. Jingdezhen, China. West Virginia University, WV
2016 **Medici Travel Grant**, Bowling Green. OH
2015 **Tom Hilty Scholarship Award**. BGSU Undergraduate Art and Design Exhibition. Uber-Bryan Gallery. Bowling Green State University, OH

EMPLOYMENT

- 2020 **Instructor of Record**, Drawing 2. West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
2019 **Internship**, The Archie Bray Foundation, Education Department, Helena, MT.
Instructor of Record, Drawing 1. West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
Instructor of Record, Ceramics 102, non-majors. West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
The Archie Bray Clay Business, Helena, MT. Summer
2018-20 **Gallery Assistant**, Laura and Paul Mesaros Galleries, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
2018 **Instructor of Record**, Ceramics 102, non-majors. West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
2016-17 **Fine Arts Specialist**, Summer Session. Common Ground, Cindy Nord Center for Renewal. Oberlin, OH
2016-17 **Counselor**, KidTime, Inc. Farragut Primary School, Knoxville, TN.
2014-16 **Resident Advisor**, Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH

RESIDENCIES AND PRESENTATIONS

- 2019 **Guest Lecturer**, "Virtual Reality and the Oculus Rift" NCECA, Minneapolis, MN
2018 **Resident Artist**, Art Farm, one-month residency, Marquette, NE
Resident Artist, CESTA (Community Engagement in Science Through Art) public sculpture, one-month residency
2017 **Guest Lecturer**, Friday Night Lecture Series, The Pottery Workshop,

Jingdezhen, China

EXHIBITIONS and PERMANENT INSTALLATIONS

- 2020 [SOLO] *MFA Exhibition*, Laura Mesaros Gallery, Morgantown, WV
Intellectually Engaged Social Distance Online Gallery, Online.
- 2019 *Perturbance*, Indiana University, Kokomo, Art Gallery. Kokomo, IN
Juried Student Exhibition, Mesaros Gallery, West Virginia University, WV
Library Show, Evansdale Library, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
- 2018 [SOLO] *Growth*, Juliet Art Museum. Charleston Art Walk. Charleston, WV
West Virginia University Student and Faculty Container Show, Standard Ceramics, NCECA, Cross Currents, Pittsburgh, PA
Student Juried Exhibition, Paul Mesaros Gallery, West Virginia University, WV
[SOLO] *Where Has The Moon Gone?* Sculptural installation. Art Farm, Marquette, NE
Confluence 2018, Artist Image Resource Center, Pittsburgh, PA
Cytochrome-C, CESTA Installation. 1 year. Evansdale Library, Morgantown, WV
- 2017 [SOLO] *Flourish*, Gallery 1010. Knoxville, TN
Found in Translation, Mufei Gallery, Jingdezhen China. International exhibition.
Sculpture Clubby, Group Show. Gallery 1010, Knoxville, TN.
Modern Studio Art Show, Modern Studio, Knoxville TN
Nasty Women, Gallery Luperca, Nashville, TN
- 2016 *Bachelor of Fine Arts, Senior Thesis Exhibition*. Dorothy Wankelman, Gallery. Bowling Green, OH
[SOLO] *Crash*, The Carillon Place Dining Center, Bowling Green, OH
It's Elemental: Earth and Air, Valley Arts Center. Chagrin Falls, OH
- 2015 *Paradigm Shift*, Pop Up Gallery. Bowling Green, OH
Undergraduate Art and Design Exhibition, Uber-Bryan Gallery. Bowling Green, OH
- 2014 *Overture II*, LeSo Gallery, Toledo, OH
Sideshow, The Collingwood Arts Center. Toledo, OH

PUBLICATIONS

- 2020 **Journal Of Chemical Education**, CESTA Project, Cytochrome-C, 2020
Calliope Literary Magazine, West Virginia University Literary Magazine, Issue 1, 2020

RELATED EXPERIENCE

- 2019 **Art Basel Miami**, juried essay contest winner for attendance, Miami, Florida
Conference, NCECA, Minneapolis, MN
Secretary, Clay Club, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
- 2018 **Art Basel Miami**, juried essay contest winner for attendance, Miami, Florida

	Conference, NCECA, Pittsburgh, PA
2016	Conference, NCECA, Kansas City, MO
	Navajo Nation Trip, Experiential Learning, AZ, NM.
2015	Conference, National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) Providence, RI
2014	Mural Project, Toledo, OH
	COMMUNITY SERVICE, CITIZENSHIP
2018-20	Empty Bowls Monongalia County, WV. Made and donated bowls for the event.
2014-16	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Volunteer Bowling Green State University, OH