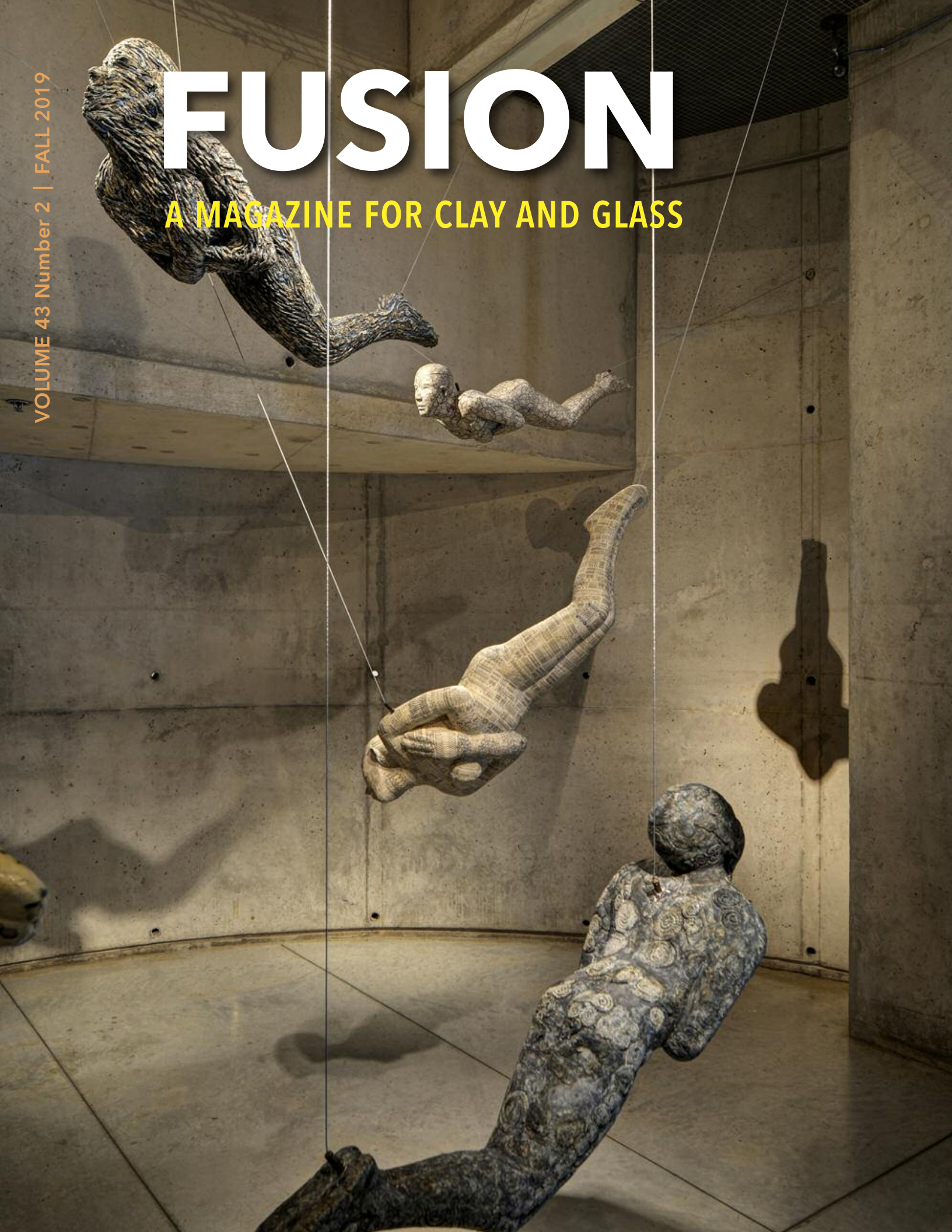


VOLUME 43 Number 2 | FALL 2019

FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS





Unswept Floor (Tesserae), 2019. Nurielle Stern. Glazed and unglazed ceramic, found glass and ceramic mosaic tiles, wood.

CONGRATULATIONS NURIELLE STERN

Winner of the 2019 Winifred Shantz Award for Ceramics

Exhibition on view September 21 to November 17, 2019

Join us for the opening reception on September 29 to celebrate the work of Stern and six finalists at the Canadian Clay & Glass Gallery.

Learn more: www.theclayandglass.ca/awards

FINALISTS

Trevor Baird
Naomi Clement
Grace Han

Joon Hee Kim
Jocelyn Reid
Zane Wilcox



EARTH • FIRE • LIGHT

25 Caroline St North, Waterloo, ON
www.theclayandglass.ca



The Keith and
Winifred Shantz
Fund for the Arts

FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS

Editor: Margot Lettner Advertising: FUSION
 Design & Production: Derek Chung Communications
 Date of Issue: Fall 2019



FUSION Magazine is published three times yearly by FUSION: The Ontario Clay and Glass Association © 2019. All rights reserved. ISSN 0832-9656; in Canadian Periodical Index. The views expressed by contributors are

not necessarily those of FUSION. Website links are based on best available information as of issue date.

Please address editorial material to fusion.editor@clayandglass.on.ca, or to FUSION Magazine, 1444 Queen Street East, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4L 1E1.

FUSION Magazine subscription is a benefit of FUSION membership and is included in membership fees. FUSION Magazine subscriptions are also available. To apply for a FUSION membership, or to purchase a one year subscription (three issues), please visit www.clayandglass.on.ca/page-752463 for details. Back issues are available.

FUSION is a not-for-profit, registered charitable organization (122093826 RR0001).

We do not make our subscribers' names available to anyone else.

FUSION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019-2020

President	Ann Allen
Past President,	Chris Snedden
Chair of Nominations Committee	
Chair of Scholarships and Awards	
Director of Breakthrough Exhibition	
Director of Creative Directions and Mentorship Program	Barbara Banfield
Secretary, Treasurer,	Gene Timpany
Director of Database and Website	
Director of Magazine	Salina Szechtman
Director of Membership,	Sasha Bateman
Guild Engagement, & Development	
Director of Conference	Ann Allen
Director at Large	Alison Brannen
Director at Large	Silvana Michetti
Director at Large	Catharina Goldnau
Director of Fireworks	Acting: Deborah Freeman
Director of Clay and Glass Show	Acting: Deborah Freeman

Executive Director	Deborah Freeman
Office Administrator	Victoria Amagna
Website and Social Media Administrator	Jenanne Longman

Address: 1444 Queen Street E.
 Toronto, Ontario
 Canada M4L 1E1

Phone: 416-438-8946
 Fax: 416-438-0192
 E-mail: fusion@clayandglass.on.ca
 Website: www.clayandglass.on.ca

FUSION gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Government of Ontario through the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Recreation and the Ontario Arts Council.



IN THIS ISSUE

Editor's Note

Margot Lettner 5

Heavy Shine: Reciprocity and Spontaneity with Dianne Lee and Robyn LeRoy-Evans

M C Baumstark 6

Embodiment: 30 Years of Sculpture by Susan Low-Beer

Diana Reitberger 10

Raconter: The New Clay Conference

Elizabeth Davies 16

Seductive Sounds: Oliver Beer: Vessel Orchestra

Barbora Racevičiūtė 19

FUSION Conference 2019: British Potters Potting

Salina Szechtman 22

FUSION Magazine Spotlight, Featured Student Artist - Glass


Gosia Martyniak 27



ON THE COVER


Susan Low-Beer, *Place of Becoming*, installation shot at Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, 2018, image: Joginder Singh






The FUSION Clay + Glass Show


- Pick up unique, handmade gifts
- Find something special for your home
- Meet the makers



Rhonda Uppington



Wendy Hutchinson



Courtney Downman



Mary Louise White



Louise McCann

FIREWORKS 2019

Thames Gallery
75 William Street N
Chatham, Ontario
Aug 30 – Oct 20, 2019

Opening reception 7 - 9 pm
August 30, 2019

Presented by
Fusion
THE ONTARIO CLAY AND GLASS ASSOCIATION

1444 Queen Street East
Toronto, Ontario, M4L 1E1
clayandglass.on.ca

FUSION thanks the following contributors and sponsors:
Gilda Goodman
Derek Chung Communications

CRAFT CHAIR
TUCKER'S
PSH THE POTTERY SUPPLY HOUSE
hamiltonpotters club
ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CARLS COURT GALLERY

October 18-20, 2019
October 18: Opening + Reception 7 - 9pm
October 19: 8am - 5pm
October 20: 11am - 5pm

Artscape Wychwood Barns
601 Christie Street, Toronto artscapewychwoodbarns.ca

FREE ADMISSION fusionclayandglassshow.ca   

Presented by:  The FUSION Clay and Glass Show is generously supported by:

 ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
le conseil des arts de l'Ontario
en français

 TUCKER'S


 PSH
THE POTTERY SUPPLY HOUSE

 The Lindy Green
Family Charitable
Foundation



For more event information visit:
www.clayandglass.on.ca

YOUR CREATIVE FUTURE STARTS HERE



Haliburton School of Art + Design
Fleming College

Full-time Studies
Our accelerated 15-week Ceramics and Glassblowing certificates can be taken individually and/or in conjunction with Visual and Creative Arts, or Integrated Design diploma programs.

Summer Arts Program
Our summer program is a nationally acclaimed art experience. We offer over 300 courses in a wide range of disciplines in week-long formats and weekend workshops.

For details: hsad.ca

It's fun to take turns.

The theme of this Fall 2019 issue of FUSION Magazine is "curator's choice." I asked some great writers – artists, gallerists, cultural workers, critics – what they'd like to write about. And some great writers have come back from their summer travels with gifts we might have missed on our own.

Barbora Racevičiūtė returns to FUSION with thoughts and questions about Oliver Beers' recent work for The Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Vessel Orchestra, 2019*, is an installation of thirty-two hollow sculptures, utilitarian containers, and decorative objects from The Met collection. Each has an innate musical frequency determined by geometry and volume: Beers amplifies and shapes it with microphones and speakers, creating both an individual voice and a collective instrument that bend sound, cultural, and curatorial barriers. I would like to thank The Met, in particular Meryl Cates, Senior Publicist, for permission to use their exhibition images.

I'm thrilled to welcome two new contributors to FUSION Magazine, each writing on artists very different. Mary C. (MC) Baumstark, Executive Director of the Lewistown Art Centre, Resident Historian for the Socially Engaged Craft Collective, and an independent curator and critic based in Central Montana, reviews *Heavy Shine*, a collaborative, intermedia, and cross-border creation of Canadian artist Dianne Lee and American artist Robyn Leroy-Evans, first shown this year at The Front, New Orleans US.

Diana Reitberger, Director of Development at The National Ballet of Canada, who generously donated The Diana Reitberger Collection of Modern and Contemporary Ceramics to the Gardiner Museum in 2018, reviews *Embodiment: 30 Years of Sculpture* by Susan Low-Beer, the recent 30-year retrospective of Susan's lifetime achievement at the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo ON. This completes this magazine's circle of deep appreciation of Susan's extraordinary work: in FUSION's Winter 2019 issue, Sheila McMath took us on a curator's critical walk through Susan's parallel exhibition at the Gallery, featuring work from her new *Specimen* series, 2018.

As well as new contributors, this issue introduces a new feature: *Raconter*, a guest space for short stories about local and regional happenings in ceramics, glass, intermedia, and beyond. Your guild; your studio; your community. Elizabeth Davies, a member of the Exhibitions Committee, Ottawa Guild of Potters,

launches *Raconter* with the debut of the New Clay Conference, May 24-26, 2019, "something new for clay" in the Ottawa ON area. If you have an idea for *Raconter*, [let me know](#).

Two FUSION events of long-standing appeal for FUSION members, readers, and clay and glass communities round out the issue. Salina Szechtman, a member of the FUSION Board of Directors and Director of Magazine, replays the engagement and excitement of this year's FUSION Annual Conference, *British Potters Potting*, held May 31-June 2, 2019 with Guest Artists John Colbeck, Lisa Hammond, and Kitty Shepherd (see also, Lisa's conversation with Leslie Menagh in FUSION's Spring 2019 issue). And, carrying on the Spotlight tradition, FUSION's own "curator's choice," FUSION celebrates Gosia Martyniak, Featured Student Artist, Glass, with a sparkling spread of her aesthetically and technically brilliant glass work.

By the time this issue finds you, green leaves will be drifting to red and yellow. I hope you enjoy the show – outside your window, and between these pages.

Margot Lettner
Editor



Annette Hansen, *Delicate Acorns*, 2019, image: Nanne Springer www.cobaltgallery.ca



Heavy Shine:

Reciprocity and
Spontaneity
with Dianne
Lee and Robyn
LeRoy-Evans

Photograph from *Heavy
Shine*, Dianne Lee and
Robyn Leroy-Evans, 2019

In March 2019, Dianne Lee and Robyn LeRoy-Evans transformed the small and winding space of “The Front” gallery in New Orleans from an industrious and white-walled gallery to an opulent and excessive archive of artistic collaboration and companionship. From spontaneous brush strokes of pink paint smattered around the gallery to the billowing and sagging textiles that covered the window, viewers were treated to an intimate glimpse of the complications of feminine creation and collaboration. Crafted over a period of several months, few visits, and many thousands of miles between Toronto and New Orleans, *Heavy Shine* was curated and assembled mindfully and collaboratively. The material will continue to be mined as the artists’ relationship shifts and changes, capable of being remixed and reworked as the exhibition moves to new locations, including Toronto in the coming months.

Heavy Shine represents a series of site-specific installations that refer back to a body of collaborative work between the two women. Created in the summer of 2018, *Heavy Shine* is dominated by the signifiers of gendered production as both artists obscure themselves betwixt, behind, or within textiles and ceramics, rendering the feminine body as both object and maker within photographed and assembled still lifes. At nearly every stage of production, from stretching before posing, to the myriad of phases inherent in a ceramic pot, LeRoy-Evans and Lee pause to make visible their labour. Thus, context becomes explicit. In one instance, the artists use photographs of themselves holding a wet, ceramic “greenware” piece as decals for the finished “Shadow Shapes (II)” vessel. Throughout the gallery, the swooping textiles are echoed in photographs like “Tending the Monumental (I & II)”, with their straining tacks



Heavy Shine, Dianne Lee and Robyn Leroy-Evans, installation view at The Front, New Orleans, 2019

and staples on the wall echoing the strained muscles of the grasping artists. Nearly every object present in the photographs is present in the space, including several unglazed plates tucked into a squirming and sensuous fibrous mass on the floor, reminding viewers that this work is far from finished, but rather, the labour continues into exhibition, documentation, and de-installation.

Rather than revel in their originality as “the maker,” LeRoy-Evans and Lee problematize artistic production and blur the edges between their respective disciplines (Lee is a trained ceramicist, while LeRoy-Evans’ work centers on photography and performance). Hence, the resulting archive defies simple categorization. Still photographs read as documentation of performance, or as sculptures themselves, installed with jarringly explicit hanging devices, and placed amidst hanging textiles. The vessels may read as photographs, paintings, or self-portraits, or merely as part of a larger assemblage present within *The Front*. Having parted ways in summer 2018, then rejoining for just a brief installation period, Dianne and Robyn offer objects that continue to be made, and remade, within shifting contexts. Situated within a collaborative practice, the artworks within *Heavy Shine* reject artistic authorship for collaborative potential, spontaneity, and interdisciplinarity.

Looking to matrilineal craft traditions, narrative vessels, and personal history, *Heavy Shine* reflects the rigour and vulnerability of

collaborative work. The artists draw from potent craft histories: from the powerful and political Greek amphora to the traditionally “women’s work” of textiles and china painting. Far from mere replication or ironic commentary as a “feminist” response to craft, I argue that *Heavy Shine* both complicates and works through issues of gendered production and privilege. *Heavy Shine* relies on the signifiers of marginalized, feminine labour like ceramic glazing, textiles, and the human form; but Dianne and Robyn remix and complicate these signifiers by looking to one another, rather than the larger discourse. As two, able-bodied, cisgender white women, Dianne and Robyn examine their specific circumstance, rather than the universal, interrogating their positionality within craft with one another and within an established friendship.

Each piece in *Heavy Shine* is self-reflexive, refers back to its own making, objecthood, and authorship. In complicating their relationships to material and to one another, Lee and LeRoy-Evans seek to learn and unlearn in their making, to question the marginalization of their work in craft, and to update and change with time.

Balancing artistic risk with trust; precise work-woman-ship with spontaneity; and personal friendship with artistic work, LeRoy-Evans and Lee leave behind a shifting and fragile archive, one that appears as fragile as a brief exhibition can feel. When bombastic and political craft are becoming the norm, the reciprocal care and community of a friendship offers a refreshing glimpse at the potential of collaborative craft, even if the remaining archive is unsteady, shifting, and likely to change.

Heavy Shine is Dianne Lee and Robyn Leroy-Evans <https://heavyspine.art>

Dianne Lee makes mugs, bowls, serving bowls, teapots and decorative vessels in small batches, wheel-thrown in stoneware, hand-drawn and hand-decorated with glazes and underglazes in crayon and paint. Her artistic credits include: Bachelor of Design from



Photograph from *Heavy Shine*, Dianne Lee and Robyn Leroy-Evans, 2019

OCADU with a major in ceramics; internship with British potter Deborah Baynes; membership in the Wellington NZ Potter’s Association; artist-in-residence at Medalta, Medicine Hat, AB; and former member of the Board of Directors of FUSION: The Ontario Clay and Glass Association. She runs the pottery program at Creative Works Studio <https://www.dianneleeceramics.ca>

Robyn LeRoy-Evans is a visual artist working in photography, installation and performance, drawing inspiration from history, mythology, and her own personal experiences. A graduate of Sheffield Hallam University UK with a First Class Honours Degree in Fine Art, she has exhibited nationally and internationally; has work in private collections in the USA, Canada, and the UK; and, since 2016, has been an active member of The Front, an artist-run exhibition space in New Orleans. She celebrated her first solo show, *A Growing Dance*, in 2017, which explored her most challenging and rewarding venture yet: motherhood <https://robynleroyevans.com>

M C Baumstark is the Executive Director of the Lewistown Art Centre, the Resident Historian for the Socially Engaged Craft Collective, and an independent curator and critic living in Central Montana.

You can find her work at www.lewistownartcenter.net or www.bonedrybodies.com or by searching @maryminimally on Instagram or Twitter.



Clockwise from left, "Shadow Shapes" vessels, Dianne Lee and Robyn Leroy-Evans; two installation views of *Heavy Shine*, Dianne Lee and Robyn Leroy-Evans, The Front, New Orleans, 2019
All images on pages 6-9 courtesy of Jonathan Traviesa. FUSION thanks Jonathan for permission.



Embodiment:

30 Years of Sculpture by Susan Low-Beer

Fig. 3, Susan Low-Beer, *State of Grace #4*, 73 x 21 x 28cm: with stand 132 x 28 x 30 cm., clay and metal stand, 2008

Artist Susan Low-Beer RCA has had a wide-ranging career as both a painter and sculptor, working in clay with the figurative form since 1984. It is very fitting that a 30-year retrospective of her sculpture, *Embodiment: 30 Years of Sculpture by Susan Low-Beer*, which was held at the Canadian Clay and Glass Museum, Waterloo ON, September 23 - December 28, 2018, and co-curated by Jasmine Jovanovic of the Art Gallery of Algoma and Stuart Reid, traces the complete evolution of her approach to not only the human form, but also her deepening interest in conveying our innate humanity.

The exhibition brought together eight specific series of work presented in a mostly chronological fashion, clearly showing the artist's evolution through each successive period. In addition, Low-Beer's latest work, *Specimen*, 2018, was shown in an adjoining gallery space, providing a glimpse into a new aesthetic and material direction that she describes as "rooted in abstraction." Curated by Sheila McMath, *Specimen* comprises 18 hand-built pieces that Low-Beer created in direct response to years of using moulds. (For Sheila's curatorial response to this work and its installation, see "Specimen Series: New Work by Susan Low-Beer" in the Winter 2019 issue of FUSION Magazine, Vol. 42 No. 3.)

Low-Beer herself has said that she came to clay "through the back door," having begun her artistic career as a painter. Influenced by the scale and surfaces of Viola Frey, Low-Beer's painterly and sculptural concerns are clearly seen in her early tabletop encaustic sculptures of the 1980s. The nine pieces shown ranged from single figures to multi-figure tableaux, exploring the state of human relationships and the issue of power in a provocative yet humorous manner (Fig. 1).

Following the layout of the exhibition



Fig. 1, Susan Low-Beer, *Picasso and Other I*, 48.5 x 37 x 23 cm., clay and encaustic, 1989

space, these sculptures lead to six works from her *Still Dances* series from the early 1990s, which saw Low-Beer introduce metal bases as a way of freeing her figures into more complex, totemic assemblages (Fig. 2). These pieces are representative of women, evocative of imagery spanning the history of art from the Venus of Willendorf to Medieval Madonnas. Composed of fragments of heads and body parts reassembled into layers of meaning and strung on poles, *Still Dances* are as complex as the individuals they reference or render; and, to Low-Beer, "convey the stillness in the centre of movement." In an essay that accompanied the original exhibition of this work at the Ontario Crafts Council in 1992, writer Derrick de Kerckhove suggests that the work is "historical cubism," bringing together different styles that represent both facets of our past and the enduring truths of our present.

We then move forward in time to Low-Beer's *State of Grace*, 2008, an installation of child-like bodies in motion, tethered to the earth on thin metal rods, first shown at the David Kaye Gallery, Toronto ON. Using moulds to create the basic one-figure form,



Embodiment: 30 Years of Sculpture by Susan Low-Beer, installation view Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery, 2019, image: Joginder Singh

she uses several different ones for the arms and legs to suggest that each figure is an individual, each moving and jumping slightly differently. Each piece also has unique surface markings to evoke its individuality. The overall feeling is one of personal histories colliding: the figures convey a moment of pure joy yet one also arrested at a moment in time –like the haunting figures unearthed in Pompeii, their souls suspended (Fig. 3). As installed at the Clay and Glass Gallery, a large window that overlooks a park framed *State of Grace*, a nice allusion to child’s play.

The next significant grouping in the exhibition was an installation of figures from Low-Beer’s *Rocksbreath*, 2001, originally thirty figures created for the Sculpture Garden of the Art Gallery of Burlington. *Rocksbreath* foreshadows aspects of Low-Beer’s work to

come: an archetypal figure, in almost fetal position, created from a single mould and finished with a unique surface, conveying at once feelings of power and powerlessness, supplication and togetherness (Fig. 4). Such is the mystery of Low-Beer’s work: it seeks to connect with us on a multitude of levels, from the spiritual to our most primal instincts.

The *Rocksbreath* sculptures were accompanied by five drawings affixed with small ceramic figures from her *Tools for Daily Living*, 2003: (Fig.5) structures of paper, found objects, and clay figures that articulate, for Low-Beer, a visual and metaphorical dialogue about our own very human tools, “aspects of our insides, the internal organs, bones, muscles and nerves that allow our bodies to function outside our consciousness and our control.”

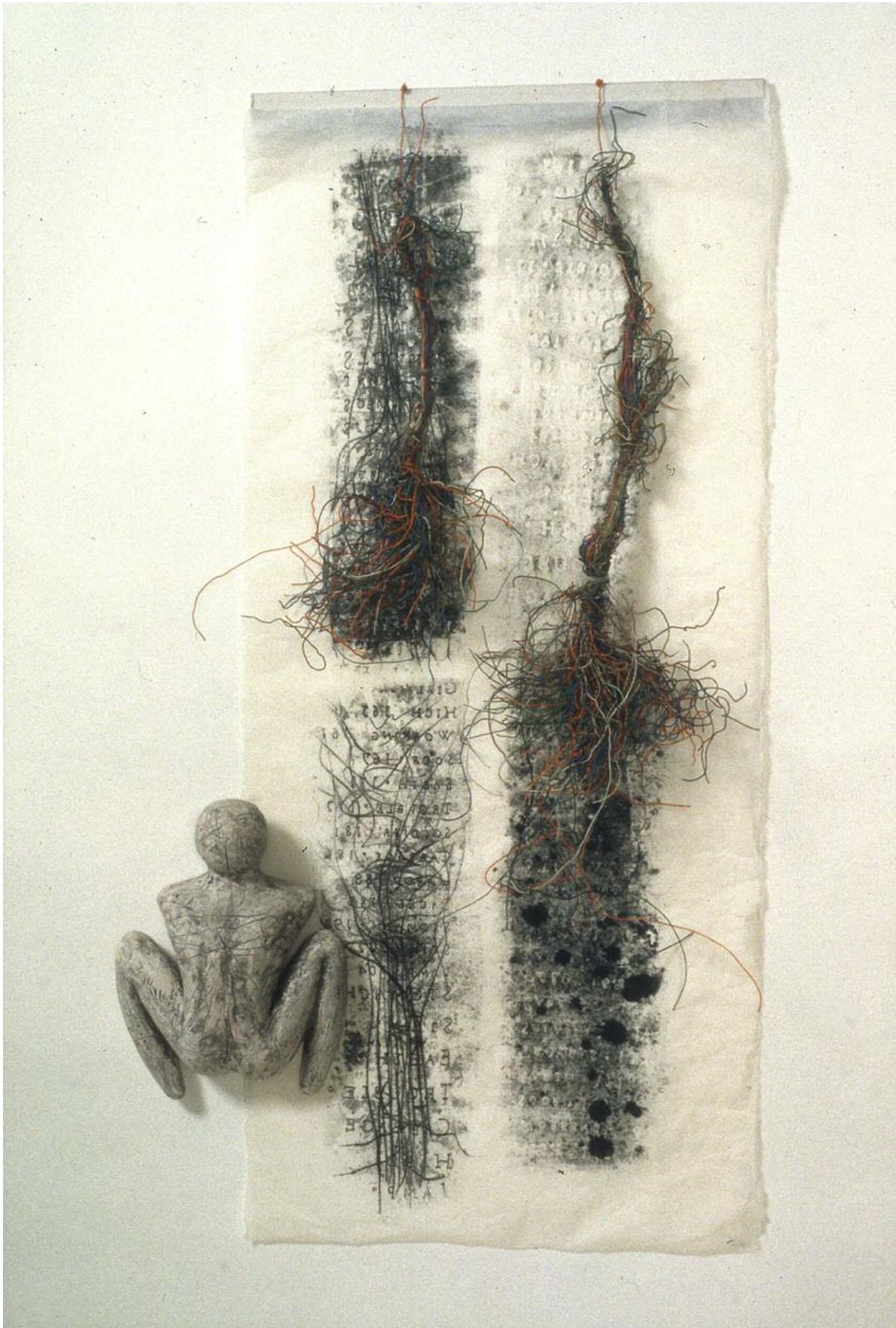


Fig.5, Susan Low-Beer, *Tools for Daily Living #8*, paper, 96 x 44cm, figure 28 x 29 x 8cm; clay, kozo paper, wire; 2001



Fig. 4, Susan Low-Beer, *Rocksbreath*, installation shot at Burlington Art Gallery, 2001, 37 x 74 x 38cm., clay, 2001

The culmination of these decades of exploration is an installation titled *Place of Becoming*, 2016, which was tucked into the Donald and Pamela Bierstock Circular Gallery. Of *Place of Becoming*, Low-Beer says:

A postcard from the Knossos Palace in Crete, of a bull leaper, was the impetus for this work. Suspended by wire, in motion, the figures embody the quality of being independent of fate or necessity. The surface of each form, cells, blood, muscles, energy, convey the internal language of the body. Perceptions of what may exist or happen, is not certain or probable, but may come to be.

This installation of nine life-size figures, suspended dramatically in the contained space, was created from a single mould (see Cover). Low-Beer has further "individualized" the figures by painstakingly applying

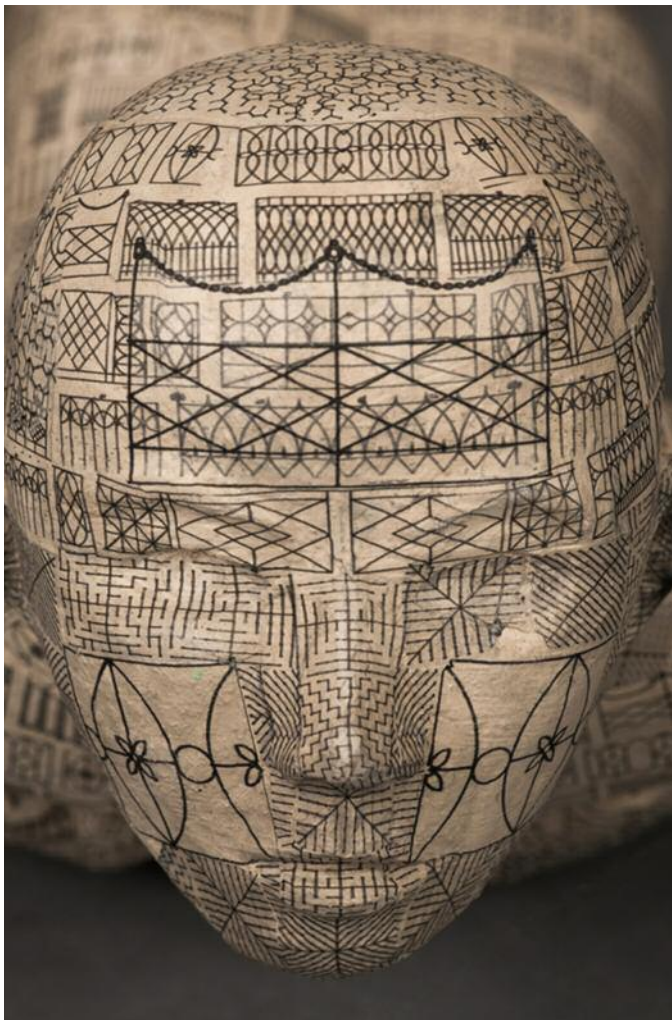


Fig. 6, Susan Low-Beer, *Place of Becoming* #E, head, detail, 2016

Japanese paper in a pattern specific to each surface (Fig. 6). As co-curator Stuart Reid remarks, these figures invite us to experience a different dimension of the work; and to actively interact with them on a whole new level.

Susan Low-Beer's *Embodiment* retrospective is of great significance to Canadian ceramic history. While an exhibition catalogue is in the works, unfortunately it was not available for sale at the three host venues. I look forward to seeing the critical writings that we were able to peruse as handouts at the show, brought together with images of the work, to create a lasting document of this important artist's explorations into the archetypal aspects of human experience.

Embodiment was exhibited at the Clay and Glass Gallery, Waterloo ON; the Art Gallery of Algoma, Sault Ste Marie ON; and the Norfolk Art Centre, Simcoe ON. All quotes from Susan Low-Beer taken from her website www.susanlow-beer.com All images courtesy of the artist except where otherwise noted.

Susan Low-Beer received her Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree at Mount Allison University and her Masters of Fine Arts in the US at the Cranbrook Academy of Art, with a major in painting. She has exhibited internationally in Europe, the US, Japan, and Korea, as well as nationally in both juried and invitational exhibitions. In 1999, she received the Saidye Bronfman Award for Excellence in the Crafts; and in 2000 she was inducted into the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts. She currently teaches and works in Toronto.

Diana Reitberger is an avid collector of ceramics and has recently donated her collection to the Gardiner Museum in Toronto. She leads the philanthropy department at The National Ballet of Canada. FUSION thanks David Kaye for bringing good people together for this feature.

Fig.2, Susan Low-Beer, *Still Dances IX*, 168 x 33 x 46 cm., clay and steel stand, 1991



Fig. 2, Jason Bige Burnett on a Speedball screen printing frame, The New Clay Conference, May 24-26, 2019, Ottawa ON image: Carole Badenoch



The New Clay Conference

The New Clay Conference, held May 24-26, 2019 at the Rideau Curling Club, attracted 90 ceramic artists from nine different provinces and territories, from as far away as Newfoundland and the Yukon to near-neighbours from the Ottawa Guild of Potters. Visitors from out of town also had the opportunity to get to know the local and regional pottery community by joining a studio and gallery tour with fourteen stops between Chelsea QC and Almonte, Perth, and Ottawa ON.

The New Clay Conference was first inspired to create a ceramic learning opportunity supported by extraordinary guest artists. It's also driven by a deliberate community focus: "Strengthening the ceramics community in Ottawa and surrounding areas, bringing together all of us working solo in our studios, in our guilds and in our co-operative studios." Bring something new for clay to the Ottawa area – new ideas, artists, events – plus highlight all of the great clay going on already. Congratulations to Kaitlyn Brennan (Kaitlyn Brennan Pottery, Ottawa) for developing and delivering this ambitious initiative, a well-organized, dynamic, inaugural event that is likely to become an annual highlight for Canadian potters.

Opening the Friday evening, Carole Epp, of Make and Do and Musing About Mud, moderated "Making It in Craft," a stimulating panel discussion among Richard Skrobecki (General Fine Craft, Almonte), Marney McDiarmid (Make and Do, Kingston Potters' Guild), Naomi Clement (Short-Term Resident, Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts, Helena, Montana) and Jason Bige Burnett (Long-Term Resident, Archie Bray Foundation). Carole put them on the spot with questions covering a range of subjects and they



Fig. 1 Naomi Clement at work, The New Clay Conference, May 24-26, 2019, image: Marney McDiarmid

responded with stories about residencies, sources of inspiration, picking themselves up after disasters, and more.

Over the next two days participants watched and learned from Naomi, Jason and Carole as they made their pieces, all three working simultaneously at separate tables at the front of the room, taking turns speaking about what they were doing, explaining their techniques, and answering endless questions from the floor. A camera focused in on the action and projected the finer details of their work onto a screen behind them.

Naomi Clement works steadily, with purpose (Fig. 1). Using hand-building techniques she makes slabs, first thicker than she needs, flipping them over by lifting with the palms of her hands, dropping and stretching them as they fall; then rolling them thinner and compressing them with a rib. She pays considerable attention to how her pots will be used; and commented on her thinking

behind lips and edges, and on how the pots meet the table. Highlighting the overlapping edges of the tapered cylinder for a mug, for example, she leaves an attractive, visible curve as she cuts through the layers of clay. Naomi also spoke about the content in her work, explaining how she enlarges text from family correspondence to make laser-cut images that she uses as resist between the multiple-coloured layers of underglaze and slip that decorate her finely-made pieces.

Jason Bige Burnett is an enthusiastic presenter who clearly loves to teach and talk with others about his art. He presented his surface design techniques, how simple sponge marks – even just manipulating a doodle – can get an attractive repeating pattern. This pattern can then be printed onto a clay surface by spreading underglaze through a Speedball screen printing frame (Fig. 2). He explained everything clearly and with great good humour; but members of the audience, taking copious notes, were relieved

to learn that he has also published a book, *Graphic Clay: Ceramic Surfaces and Printed Image Transfer Techniques*, and produces a Ceramic Arts Daily DVD, *The Graphic Pot*, which provide further detail.

Carole Epp demonstrated how her narrative art takes shape, both in her functional forms and in her edgy sculptural pieces. The designs appear slowly, progressively. Working on a hand-thrown vase, she draws her story freehand, in pencil, onto the rounded surfaces of the bone-dry clay. She shared some of her techniques: coating the surface with wax; cutting fine lines through the wax to the clay beneath; then brushing on black underglaze and wiping off the excess. To show what she would do once the piece was bisqued, she took a bisqued bowl she had previously designed and painted her drawings using dried-out underglazes (Fig. 3). The audience was also intrigued to see another way she tells stories in clay. In this example, she chose to build a sculpture about environmental degradation; she started by taking a commercial figurine of a girl chopping wood and then proceeded to create a new setting around it.

On Sunday morning, Art Petch (Alpine Clayworks Studio, Ottawa) presented a workshop on the intricacies of making and using decals. He will be holding an additional workshop at Hintonburg Pottery Shop for those interested in learning more. Art also generously offered the opportunity to work in his workshop with his computer and printer, which is equipped with ceramic toner.

The New Clay Conference plans a return to Ottawa in 2020. Follow them on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and their [website](#)

Elizabeth Davies is a member of the Exhibitions Committee, Ottawa Guild of Potters www.elizabeth-davies.com

FUSION thanks Carole Badenoch and Marney McDiarmid for permission to use their images.



Fig. 3 Carole Epp drawing and painting, The New Clay Conference, May 24-26, 2019, Ottawa ON, image: Carole Badenoch

Seductive Sounds:

*Oliver Beer:
Vessel Orchestra*



Oliver Beer (British, b. 1985). *Vessel Orchestra*, 2019. 32 hollow objects from The Met collection, microphones, speakers, keyboard, and associated audio equipment. © Oliver Beer, courtesy of the artist and Galerie Thaddaeus Ropac

It happened to be at The Met Breuer to see the exhibition *Oliver Beer: Vessel Orchestra* the day that renowned Italian artist Marisa Merz [passed away](#) after a long and prolific career, at the age of 93. This coincidence felt quite symbolic: I'd discovered Merz a number of years earlier at the Breuer on the occasion of the Arte Povera artist's beautifully-titled retrospective [The Sky is A Great Space](#) (2017). Merz's objects were my introduction to thinking about historically situated, canonized works in contemporary terms. Merz is generally referred to as a painter and sculptor, but her practice extends far beyond these designations. She creates the most delicate-feeling artworks I'd ever seen out of most common materials – copper, aluminum, unrefined clay. Since the time I spent with Merz' work that day in 2017, I've understood hers as a truly interdisciplinary practice committed to the material conditions of her time: one that was deeply misarticulated within art historically bound medium-specific categorizations; and one that I was extremely glad to see The Met Breuer champion in its galleries. Marisa Merz's work articulates the criticality of material history in understanding contemporary art.

It is with these thoughts that I entered Beer's exhibition. Commissioned by The Met, *Oliver Beer: Vessel Orchestra* is comprised of thirty-two objects that the emerging British artist selected from the museum's collection for their natural pitches on the chromatic scale. Placing microphones into his chosen vessels – vases, busts, pitchers – Beer created a score that plays throughout the day in the gallery. The objects are arranged in a dynamic composition that draws attention to the breadth of their materials, from bronze to copper foil, ceramics to earthenware; and to the differences of their shapes, from sharp edges to soft lines. The works range in time

and origin from 5300-4300 BCE in Central Iran; to the 1662-1722 CE reign of the Kangxi Emperor, in China; to nineteenth-century Germany; to the present-day United States. As the score amplifies and quiets, the sounds produced reveal another dimension to the vessels. They expand the object's being beyond appearance and function; make us think about their interiors, about the places the vessels are speaking from. The sound they make places the objects into dialogue and allows us to experience their conversations: it seems to give them agency.

Flooding the room, the lulling sounds resonate within the viewers' body, producing a sense of unity and serenity. Despite this overwhelming affective comfort, or perhaps because of it, I read Beer's manipulative hand in creating this work as an act of domination: domination over materiality, over culture, over history – here very much global in reach. Indeed [Beer's European positionality](#), coupled with the hegemonic stature of The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, make it hard to fall openly into the artist's enticing auditory intertwining of objects. What can be articulated as Beer *placing* the works into productive relation can also be seen as an act of *forcing* his objects into a fake amicability. His act privileges the tonal allegiances of objects and very much eschews the historical inequalities among them; in particular, how they've come to and have been considered within the historical canon of Western art. Though the works quite literally speak to us from the past, Beer doesn't allow them to tell us anything concrete. His work does not interrogate or unpack the imperialistic, colonial, and often violent trajectories of objects in museum collections. And while there is definitely cultural value in foregrounding the global, material, affinities among objects across time, an exhibition



Installation view of Oliver Beer: *Vessel Orchestra* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art © Metropolitan Museum of Art 2019, Photography by Wilson Santiago

predicated on the activation of a collection first needs to do the work of outlining the specific histories of the objects it presents before it can attempt any kind of geography-based material parallels. Understood within the framework of Marisa Merz's practice, a practice predicated on visibilizing the socio-economic conditions that enable access to materials and production, Beer's attempt at an affectively reparative gesture is, in fact, another flattening of historical material difference in virtue of a synthetic harmony.

A recent Met acquisition, Julian Schnabel's *Bones and Trumpets Rubbing Against Each Other Toward Infinity* (1981) hangs one floor below Beer's exhibition. It is a momentous dark painting comprised of paint, wax, plaster, and giant pieces of broken ceramics. Stumbling upon it, I could not help but see it as the aggressive and destructive opposite of Beer's work. Experientially, Beer is quite successful in distancing his hand from *Vessel Orchestra*; and in bestowing a sense of autonomy on the objects to emphasize their interdependencies as well as our continual dependence on them. With some distance, however, I understand Schnabel's work as the more honest gesture: direct in asserting the



Installation view of Oliver Beer: *Vessel Orchestra* at The Metropolitan Museum of Art © Metropolitan Museum of Art 2019, Photography by Wilson Santiago

artist's hand – as Western, as male – as having ultimate control: it is he who holds the power to preserve, to activate and, ultimately, to break.

Barbora Racevičiūtė is a Toronto-based cultural worker who co-runs a curatorial collective called *shell*. Thanks to Maegan Broadhurst for all things always and specifically for not letting me off the hook on this one.

Page 19, Top, Left to right:
Vase, China Qing dynasty (1644-1911), Qianlong period (1736-95), Porcelain, H. 16 in. (40.6 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Bequest of Benjamin Altman, 1913 (14.40.400)

Ewer, Manufacturer: Franchi and Son British, London, after Flemish, Antwerp original 19th century, after 1558-59 original. Electroformed copper, silver plated and gilt, Height: 19 in. (48.3 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Purchase, 1873 (73.8.52)

Vessel in form of female (?) figure, Iran, Luristan, Chekka Sabzca, 7th- 6th century B.C. Ceramic, 23.82 in. (60.5 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Rogers Fund, 1943 (43.89.3)

Axe Vessel, Gordon Baldwin (British, born 1932) 1986. Earthenware, H. 29-5/8, W. 16, D. 7 in. (75.2 x 40.6 x 17.8 cm) 27.8 lb. (12.6 kg). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Gift of Adrian Sassoon, Esq., 1998 (1998.289) © Gordon Baldwin

The Virgin, Andrew O'Connor (American, Worcester, Massachusetts 1874- 1941 Dublin), 1906, cast 1909. Bronze, 17 1/4 x 8 x 9 in. (43.8 x 20.3 x 22.9 cm). The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Rogers Fund, 1918 (18.38)



FUSION Conference 2019: British Potters Potting



Above and below: Kitty Shepherd,
FUSION Conference, May 31-June 2,
2019, Hamilton ON image: Rhonda
Uppington

For the FUSION Conference 2019, May 31-June 2, British potters and Guest Artists John Colbeck, Lisa Hammond, and Kitty Shepherd flew across the Atlantic to spend three days sharing their skills, knowledge and thinking on working with clay; how to keep the “potting cycle” going; the present and future value of ceramics; and many other ideas and current topics. There’s lots to learn from these masters and fellow potters from across the pond.

You could tell that John was an educator from his articulate explanations and demonstrations of his technique, process, and thinking. As former Head of Ceramics at Bath Academy of Art, teacher emeritus in stoneware and porcelain (this past summer, at La Meridiana, Italy), and established author, John continues to push the boundaries while reminding us of the strong influence British artists like him have had on ceramics in Ontario and Canada. I picked up some very interesting tips and tricks that I tried when I got home – and was impressed that I could repeat what I saw. This is a testament not only to John’s technique, but also his willingness to show and describe all the steps involved in making it work.

Being awarded an MBE (Member of the British Empire) for contribution to the arts is no small feat, equivalent to receiving a Governor General’s Award in Canada. In the Spring 2019 issue of FUSION Magazine, Lisa Hammond speaks with Leslie Menagh about the work that continues to win her recognition, not only as a potter but also as a teacher and advocate for ceramics in the UK. Lisa talked more about these things at the conference: about being a potter; and how being a potter is not only about making pots, but also about keeping the cycle going through helping and engaging young potters. She brought some easy-to-make tools along

to show us how she uses them. It’s obvious how Lisa’s dynamic spirit is embedded in her technique and process.

Ceramic artist, Kitty Shepherd is known for her large hand built colourful vessels and popular iconography: she likes to paint, and uses a three-dimensional surface to do so. Her design background helps her invent templates to build forms by hand so she can paint on them. She showed us the magic that makes her templates easy to use while building large vessels. Those who have been to presenter workshops know that watching someone hand build a vase can feel like watching paint dry, or waiting for a kettle to boil – but not if you’re watching Kitty. In between explanations about what she was doing, she had lots else to say to engage her audience.

The intimate audience, theatre-style seating, and social gatherings over the three days of the conference made conversation easy. There was lots of discussion about working in Europe as a British citizen, now and in any post-Brexit future. The rise in value and popularity of ceramics in Britain was also a topic: for more about this, see Amy Fleming’s eloquent article “Top of the pots: the smashing rise of ceramics” in *The Guardian*, reprinted with permission in the Spring 2019 issue of FUSION Magazine. Echoing the perspectives in the article, we heard that this renewed focus on British Ceramics is due to the engagement of younger makers and collectors; the ability to communicate and sell work online; and the recent BBC2 series in quest of a “Top Potter,” *The Great Pottery Throw Down*.

A conference like this doesn’t happen without backstage enthusiasm, planning, trouble-shooting, and on-the-ground logistics. FUSION’s sponsors, volunteers, staff, directors, and vendors worked extremely hard

to make this event happen. Sponsors Tuckers Pottery, Pottery Supply House, and Jenny Rushforth were extremely generous in their support of both the conference and the opening of FUSION's bi-annual show, FIREWORKS 2019, on the Friday night.

Amazing spot prizes kept everyone coming back on time from breaks: imagine winning 10 boxes of clay! I heard several people say how nice it was to be able to buy supplies right there and save the drive.

We also fundraised to raise money for FUSION scholarships and bursaries, paying forward to support artists' professional development with fun events like paying to play heads or tails. John, Lisa, and Kitty all donated work for the cause. A seasoned fundraiser herself, Lisa also donated her apron (which the winner got to take home and wash before using).

Of course, no matter how hard you try with lists and emails and contracts, sometimes the



John Colbeck, at FUSION, images and collage: Adriana Romkes, 2019

“should work” turns out to be “does not work”, especially, it seems, when it comes to technology! But people told me they had a positive experience: the guest artists and presenters were dynamic, informative, and fun; and it was great to be back in the FUSION community, renewing friendships, swapping studio secrets, meeting new members and younger artists.

Thank you to everyone who made this a great conference and see you in 2020!

Salina Szechtman is a member of FUSION’s Board of Directors, and Director of Magazine. You can reach her at fusion.magazine@clayandglass.on.ca

FUSION thanks artists Rhonda Uppington www.rhondauppington.com and Adriana Romkes, President, Hamilton Potters' Guild adriana@adrdesigns.ca for permission to use their images.



Lisa Hammond, at FUSION, images and collage: Adriana Romkes, 2019



FUSION MAGAZINE SPOTLIGHT FEATURED STUDENT ARTIST, GLASS

Gosia Martyniak [WEBSITE](#)

My drive as an artist revolves around the idea of a beautiful death that does not equal finality. I borrow the aesthetics and symbols of myth, art history, and fantastical narratives to fuel the imagery I render. With techniques that combine illustration and sculpture, I create eloquent objects that evoke solace in myself and wonder in others. In exploring despair and death, I am celebrating hope and life.

I was born in London, Ontario. Expressing interest for a career in art, I attended Western University and received my Bachelor of Fine Arts, specializing in printmaking. I then decided to continue education in hopes of further developing my identity in the art world. My pursuit brought me to the Craft and Design Bachelor Program at Sheridan College.

Originally applying for Illustration, I wound up wait-listed and entered my second choice, Glass, to fill in the time. Enamoured by the tireless labour and satisfying outcomes, I stayed, specializing in kilnforming (which includes kilncasting), fusing, and enamel and silver stain firing. Now graduated, I'm excited to employ the priceless skill I've acquired and make incredible things that channel my passions.





DISCOVERY ART TRAVEL

Upcoming Ceramic Excursions

SPAIN

March 16 - 31, 2020

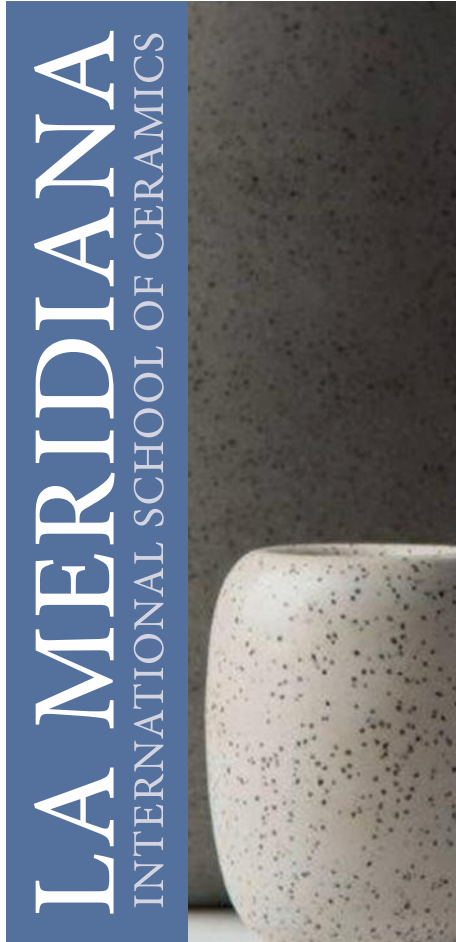
JAPAN

November 2020

MOROCCO

Spring 2021

www.denysjames.com



Workshops
in Tuscany
for all levels, with Italian
& international artists.



www.lameridiana.fi.it

FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS

FUSION MAGAZINE

Volume 43, No. 3

Issue: Winter 2020

Editorial and Advertising
submissions Deadline:

November 15, 2019

To place an
advertisement in
FUSION,
please contact the
FUSION Office at
416-438-8946 or
fusion@clayandglass.on.ca

If you would like to
write for FUSION or have
an idea for an article,
please contact
Margot Lettner,
Editor, at
fusion.editor@clayandglass.ca

New!



DIAMOND GRIT

DISKS PADS

TRIMMING TOOL SHARPENER

FILES SHEETS

DISKS

TGD81 8" dia. 60 grit
 TGD82 8" dia. 120 grit
 TGD86 8" dia. 240 grit

TGD60 12" dia. 60 grit
 TGD12 12" dia. 120 grit
 TGD24 12" dia. 240 grit

TDTS
 Trimming
 Tool Sharpener
 4" x 3/4" blade.
 300 grit & 700 grit

\$20



TDP12
 120 grit



Files: 10 styles, 5" long **\$4 ea.**



TDP60
 60 grit

\$20

TDS60
 60 grit

Pads & Sheets
 2.25" x 3.5"

\$15



TDS12
 120 grit



TDFSX
 set/10 **\$25**



8" & 12"
 disks are mounted on a 14" plastic
 batt with pin holes centered 10" apart.

\$50

\$75

Other abrading
 tools available:



TFHDG
 Kiln Shelf Grinder



TGGSP
 Kiln Shelf Grinder



TFGGT
 Grinding Stone

1-800-465-8544



The most trusted name in clay.

SERVING POTTERS
FOR OVER 40 YEARS.



TUCKER'S

Pottery Supplies Inc.

EVERYTHING THE POTTER COULD POSSIBLY NEED.
ORDER ONLINE, BY PHONE OR IN STORE.

15 West Pearce Street Unit #7, Richmond Hill, Ontario
www.tuckerspotttery.com toll free: 1-800-304-6185

