

# **Gardiner Shop**

**May - July 2021**

**FUSION: The Ontario Clay and  
Glass Association presents**

# **Cultivate**

**Kristina Albright**

**Juana Berinstein**

**Aneela Dias-D'Sousa**

**Silvana Michetti**

**Jason Schiedel**

**Danielle Skentzos**

**Ekta Trienekens**

**Claire Nicole Waddick**

## FUSION Creative Directions (2019 – 2021)

*Cultivate* is the culmination of FUSION's *Creative Directions* program. The purpose of this program is to foster conceptual and technical development for practitioners of ceramics who are at a point in their careers when they are contemplating a change in direction.

*Creative Directions* has given the participants an opportunity to question their creative process in an accepting and supportive environment. As mentor, I challenged them to do a deep dive into their emotional and personal experiences in order to establish a foundation for work that originates from within themselves and is not overly influenced by current styles and trends.

Each participant took on the challenge and produced intelligent and meaningful work. It must be stressed that the finished work in this exhibition, aptly named *Cultivate*, is the beginning of the journey, not the end.

Thank you FUSION for allowing me to take these participants on this journey.

**Angelo di Petta**  
Mentor





# Kristina Albright

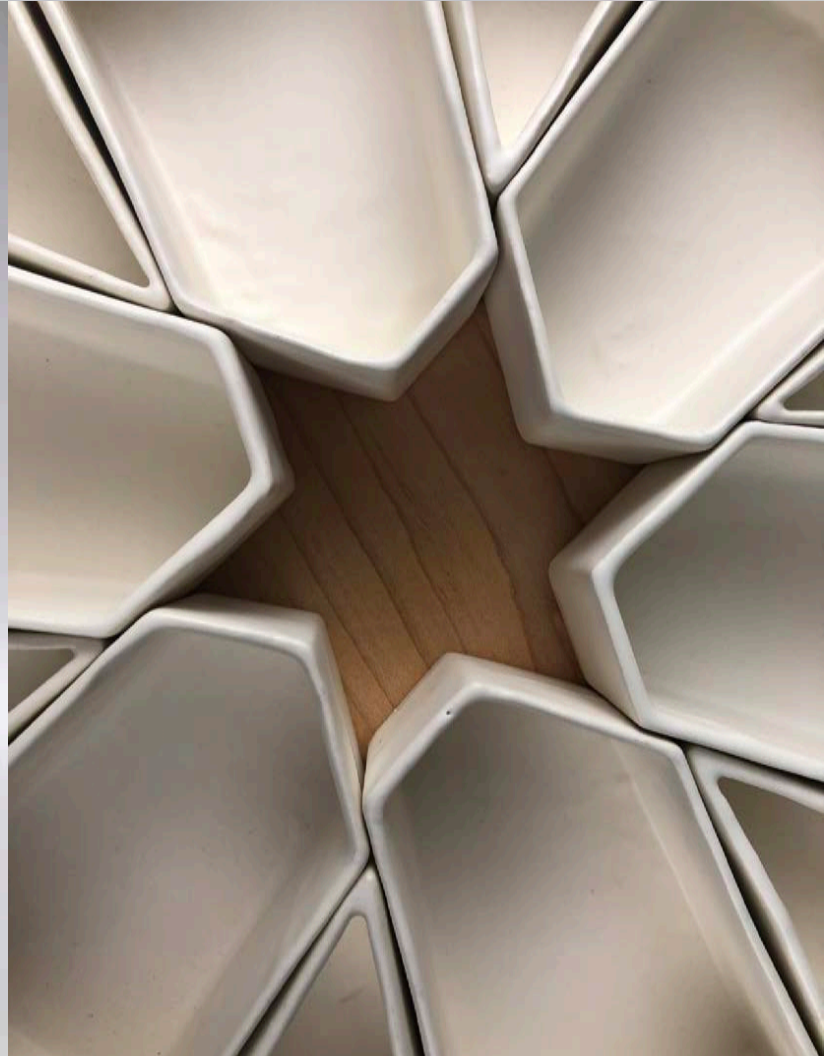
‘Nature’s Lasting Moments’ water jug and cup set was inspired by my lifelong adventures in the epic forests and fields of Haliburton, Ontario. It captures unique moments of nature’s beauty—especially flowers, foliage, and water—that I remember seeing. These moments would have been hidden from me if I had not been paying close attention.

The set is made of white stoneware using a mix of wheel-throwing and hand-building techniques. The surface is decorated with refined carvings, brushed red slip, and agate. I used a technique of a mixing and slicing multiple different clays into patterns. The water jug has two handles for an easy pour, and has carvings of cardinal flowers, stones, lilies, and swirling water with fish. The cups are squat and wide in form and have delicate variations in hue, with intertwined carvings of cardinal flowers, agate stones, and a water-like water like pattern, all finished in a traditional celadon glaze.

## About the Artist

**Kristina Albright** lives in Peterborough, Ontario. She grew up in Pickering with a family that encouraged her artistic talents. Kristina studied at Fleming College, graduating with a Visual and Creative Arts Diploma and a Ceramics Certificate. The unique brushwork on her pottery is a result of her extensive background in painting. In 2015, she went to Icheon City, South Korea for three weeks to work alongside local master potters. This surface decoration and forms of her pottery are influenced by this experience. It is meaningful to Kristina to create functional ceramics that people use in their daily lives. She continues to develop her work by experimenting with glaze chemistry. *Creative Directions* taught her the value of experimentation in creating new functional forms. This approach will continue to influence her work in the future.





# Juana Berinstein

The Passover Seder plate is a Jewish ritual object. Passover is a celebration of freedom. The traditional Seder plate holds foods that are symbolic of the Jewish escape from slavery in ancient times. 'Social Justice Seder Plate' is a reconstruction of the traditional plate for a progressive approach to engaging with Judaism. It includes foods typically found on a Seder plate and infuses them with meaning for contemporary times. It also offers six new foods to incorporate into Passover.

**An acorn** acknowledges Indigenous people and land (Turtle Island) and serves as a call for decolonization.

**Horseradish** symbolizes the bitterness of enslavement.

**Celery** represents the historical and continued violence against racialized people and asserts: Black Lives Matter.

**A mix of nuts and apples** represents the mortar used by enslaved people in ancient times forced to work in construction and the sweetness of freedom.

**A roasted egg** symbolizes renewal.

**Parsley** represents the possibility of growth, dipped in salt water to symbolize tears shed for injustice.

**The traditional shank bone** is replaced with a vegetarian beet and represents the liberation of ancestors.

**Orange** marks the inclusion of queer and trans people (and in some households, feminism) and the repudiation of homophobic and transphobic violence.

**Olives** serve as gesture to Palestine, both the land and its people.

**Artichoke** represents the inclusion and affirmation of chosen and interfaith families.

**A pinecone** represents a call for prison reform/abolition.

**Coffee beans** symbolize histories of enslavement and the realities of exploitive labour practices which continue in present day.

## About the Artist

**Juana Berinstein** (pronouns she/her or they/them) was born in Argentina, and is of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry. She immigrated to Canada in the early 1980's and now lives in Toronto. Berinstein has an undergraduate degree in Women and Gender Studies and a Master's degree in Communication and Culture. In 2019, she completed a one-month artist residency at Medalta in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Berinstein's ceramic work has been exhibited in juried shows in Canada and the US.





# Aneela Dias-D'Sousa

This series of work called 'Incubate' is about creating an opportunity that prioritizes human connections; giving importance to those meaningful interactions that we took for granted until they were no longer possible.

The idea for this work came about during my observations of gatherings and identifying the instances when people engaged the most. I found that the greatest interactions took place over libations. At its best, there exists wise counsel, nurturing of ideas, views exchanged, humour, and communication on many levels during these pockets of time. This piece seeks to encourage those affirmative connections. I regard people and these transient moments as fragile and valuable. I want to preserve them as preciously as eggs in a nest. The sipping cups meant for libations, are slip cast and intentionally lightweight, to heighten the sense of fragility. The cups are presented in a dark, substantial base to provide a sense of contrast and permanence.

My hope is that when people engage with these delicate cups it will prompt them to reflect on the ephemerality of the moment they are in and the people they are connecting with. The cups, when positioned on the base, offer a sense of entities that are physically different but share a common source. The base is wheel thrown and altered in cone 6 stoneware. The sipping cups are slip cast in cone 6 porcelain. This work is food safe, and hand washing, is encouraged.

## About the Artist

**Aneela Dias-D'Sousa** established herself as a ceramic artist after graduating from the University of Mumbai (B.F.A Ceramics) in India. After immigrating to Canada, she continued her education at Sheridan College as a mature student. Aneela currently lives and works in Pickering, Ontario and has pursued residencies at Toronto's Harbourfront Centre and the International Ceramics Centre in Kecskemet, Hungary. Aneela's studio practice includes curated and juried exhibitions, craft sales, and commissions. She enjoys teaching and giving back to her community through volunteer work. She currently holds the position of Past President with Toronto Potters, and was recently invited to join Make and Do, a Canadian collective of ceramic artists.







# Silvana Michetti

My recent ceramic work is based on a series of sculptural forms that functions as light holders. I have been exploring the relationship between structure and surface by working with the luminous character of thin porcelain walls. The structural forms have evolved from my interest in garment patterns, architecture, shells, and leaf curls. The textural surfaces are influenced by textiles: the weaving, knitting, crochet, and basketry in which structure and surface are integrated. This series, 'Solace', is designed to illuminate a domestic space with warmth and comfort. The light source inside the lamps gives prominence to the interior space and activates the form. The play of light and shadow reveals the curving planes, breaks, and joins, as well as emphasizing the woven thread patterns and embossed textures within the vessel walls. I think of these lamp forms as a tangible expression of the idea of light as solace.

## About the Artist

**Silvana Michetti** lives in Toronto, Ontario. She studied Visual Arts at York University (BFA Honours Specialist) concurrently with Education (B.Ed.) and taught visual arts in schools in Ontario and other settings. Travel and work in Europe and Italy has enhanced her appreciation for art, design, and architecture. Throughout her teaching career, she has participated in workshops and taken courses whenever possible, exploring the potential of the clay medium with functional, decorative, and sculptural investigations. Silvana's recent work is focused on abstract sculptural forms which involve light and shade as an important element, combined with embossed textile patterns. The commitment to her working process this past year was strengthened and encouraged through the FUSION program, *Creative Directions: Dynamic Design*. This has allowed her to focus on a concept and explore it in depth, with the mentorship of Angelo di Petta and the support of her peers.





# Jason Schiedel

The vessels I created for *Cultivate* deploy movement and gesture to navigate speculative distance. They appear to be in active relationship to themselves, with multiple parts in flux-forms that wrap around, melt, and come together. I have designed them to look as if they are offering themselves tenderness and support. I like to think that in showing how it is to be held, they extend an embrace to the viewer, who is now held in the act of beholding. This series resulted from asking two questions: What is the relationship of desire to belonging? What is the purpose of a pot when not performing the act of holding?

## About the Artist

**Jason Schiedel** is originally from Waterloo, Ontario, and currently lives on the shores of Lake Huron in the rural town of Port Elgin. He studied Fine Art, earning an undergraduate degree in Sculpture/Installation from the Ontario College of Art and Design, and an MFA in Sculpture from Cranbrook Academy of Art. Jason worked in a wide variety of media before centring his practice in clay, where he discovered a material rich for exploring the subjects of intimacy, relationship, and connection. His approach to ceramics is largely self-taught, enhanced by workshops in mould making and design with Angelo di Petta and Peter Pincus. Jason is grateful for the opportunity of developing a new vocabulary for his vessels in the supportive environment of *Creative Directions*. The experience deepened his understanding of pottery form and function, and opened his design approach to include consideration of the forming process itself, so that it might yield more unexpected results. Jason founded Region of Plenty as an artisanal ceramic design brand in 2020.





# Danielle Skentzos

My line for *Cultivate* was developed from my exploration of surface design during my *Creative Directions* journey. It is a reflection on the reciprocity of life on a farm. One side illustrates the imperfect patina and rustic charm of living in the countryside. Sparked by finding my grandmother's book on Ontario Weeds. The other side outlines my deep appreciation of family farms and the complexity of the problems they face while trying to feed us.

The forms are wheel-thrown stoneware with some hand-built pieces. The lines at the base of each object represent the horizontal lines of a silo, a keeper of food. The coloured porcelain slip is applied to suggest old grainery boards. The underglaze vertical stripes are a trace of feed sacks and green tin roofs. Each piece is then individually carved with barns and fields on one side and images of weeds and wildflowers on the opposite side. The handles are glazed to a rust, and the top and bottom bands are glazed with a hint of yellow, suggesting my grandmother's book. Finally, the interior gets a clear coat, leaving evidence of the earth that makes our food and my art.

The natural beauty of my surroundings continues to inspire me. It calls out to slow down and appreciate the small, simple pleasures of our everyday lives. My work is simply a response to the gifts around me.

## About the Artist

**Danielle Skentzos** lives in the fields of Oro-Medonte, Ontario. Her first career is in education and she earned degrees from the University of Western Ontario and Griffith University in Queensland, Australia. It was when she returned to Canada that she first experienced the feeling of clay smoothly turning through her hands on a pottery wheel. It was a curiosity that unearthed a feeling of home; of early years spent watching animals and acres grow and a youth of tending local gardens with friends. Danielle learned about ceramics from a variety of generous artists and time spent at the Haliburton School of Art. She founded Shiralee Pottery to share her work, inspired by the beauty found near home. *Creative Directions* has planted seeds of inspiration for new designs and built a community with others who appreciate the wonder of what our earth offers: clay.





# Eekta Trienekens

The 'Conservation Water Set' is inspired by a medieval walled city and the idea that water is part of our defense system, in cities and in our bodies. Water is also becoming more and more precious and thus needs our protection. While city walls are protective, they sometimes prevent good things from entering or bad things from leaving.

## About the Artist

**Eekta Trienekens** grew up in the Netherlands and lived in the medieval cities of Amersfoort and Leiden before moving to Canada, a little over a decade ago. Her mother is from Panjab, India, and Eekta spent many seasons there for extended visits with her grandparents. The extreme contrast between these two worlds is a strong influence on her work, oscillating between a sense of belonging and otherness. Eekta has a degree in Arts Education (Utrecht) and South Asian Studies (Leiden). Though she works with a variety of materials, ceramics has been her main artistic practice since 2015.







# Claire Nicole Waddick

'Hill and Dale Dinnerware' offers a new interpretation of farm-to-table, inspired by the rolling farmlands of the Waterloo Region. The forms and colours are impressions of the local rural landscape. I chose brown stoneware to represent the soil. I use a painterly palette: soft greens for a mid-summer oat field, deep green and blue for the trees that border a field, golds for corn stalks in autumn, and blue-grey for rain clouds that quench the crops. A place setting looks like a topographic map. I carefully designed the form of each dish with function in mind. The plates and bowls can easily be lifted from a table with one hand because they have a wide lip and the bottom surfaces are unglazed to improve grip. The profiles are designed to fit in dishwashers and the sculpted feet allow water to drain.

## About the Artist

**Claire Nicole Waddick** lives in Waterloo, Ontario. She grew up in Southwestern Ontario and spent lots of time on her grandparents' farm in Kent County. Claire graduated with a BA in Aesthetics and Cultural Studies from Carleton University that included studies in Industrial Design. She also studied Painting and Drawing at the Ontario College of Art and Design. Claire began her art career as a painter. In 2010, ceramics became her main artistic practice and it felt like a homecoming. With ceramics, Claire is able to apply her understanding of three-dimensional design along with her knowledge of painting and colour theory. Like her paintings, her ceramics are inspired by rural landscapes. She completed artist residencies at Medalta in Medicine Hat, Alberta and the London Clay Art Centre in London, Ontario. *Creative Directions* taught Claire how to better integrate function with her artistic vision.



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