

CERAMICS NOW

JANE HARTSOOK GALLERY'S 2022 EXHIBITION SERIES

EXHIBITIONS

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The Architecture of Solace
January 7 – February 4, 2022

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September 9 – October 21, 2022

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JANE HARTSOOK GALLERY AT GREENWICH HOUSE POTTERY

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PREFACE

This catalog is printed on the 121th anniversary of Greenwich House, the parent organization of Greenwich House Pottery. Greenwich House was founded with a mission to deliver health and human services and arts and cultural programming to the then low-income residents of Greenwich Village, many of whom were recent immigrants. One hundred and twenty years ago, our founder Mary Simkovich understood that making art was as important to the development and well-being of an individual as food and shelter. As we slowly transition from the death and social isolation caused by the COVID pandemic, we are increasingly aware of the adverse effects that this time has had on our physical and mental health. We are now seeking new ways to give shape to our creativity and seeking supportive communities in which to do so. What better time to celebrate life by digging into this catalog to see the art made by our artists in residence and accomplished artists from throughout our country. Enjoy, be well and remember that *Ars longa, vita brevis* or *art is long, life is short!*

Fabio J. Fernández is the Director at Greenwich House Pottery.

CERAMICS NOW 2022

Greenwich House Pottery has been organizing ceramics exhibitions for over 118 years. For almost 70 of those years, exhibitions took place all over New York, but in 1970 director Jane Hartsook established a gallery space dedicated to the ceramic arts in the Pottery's historic building. Though the location of the exhibitions has changed over the last century, our mission has remained the same: to support artists and their projects, with an emphasis on promoting emerging and underrepresented artists. We strive to show as complete a snapshot of American ceramics as possible, but with the amount of creativity and innovation happening in our field, we are only able to show a small slice of that ingenuity each year. This makes our task daunting, but also exciting.

This year, four artists had their New York City solo-show debuts in our gallery, and one had his curatorial debut. Several common threads ran through these exhibitions, including an emphasis on environment, perspective, and history. From the calm surroundings created by Eliza Au's wireframe-inspired ceramic lattices, to the magical realist "windows" into Judd Schiffman's inner world, to the ecologically inspired installation of *Ediacaran fauna* by Rachel Eng, these exhibitions touched on the impact our environments can have on our notions of spirituality, ourselves, and the effect we have on our planet. Each of the residents and fellows in our annual *Ceramics Now* exhibition made work that focused on their family histories, as did each of the artists in the group show curated by Edward Salas: *Dirty Work*. From Wansoo Kim who manipulated the literal perspective of his vessels, to Rachel Eng who used the concept of deep time to contextualize our current ecological moment, each of the artists in this exhibition series called on us to look at our world anew.

The 2022 exhibition year began with **Eliza Au's** debut solo New York City show, *The Architecture of Solace*, an installation of ceramic lattice screens that used ornament to reexamine sacred space. Through computer-aided design, Au translated repetitive abstract patterns into clay, constructing forms that evoked architectural units like bricks, tiles, and pillars to inspire a sense of meditative rhythm. The finished ceramic works were a physical manifestation of the computer-based wireframe, a design form in which structure and ornament become inseparable. The composition of the ceramic lattice screens was so detailed that the negative space defined the work as much as the positive space, creating a compelling duality of form that, along with the structure's abstract patterning, formed a window into a calmer world.

Judd Schiffman's New York City solo-show debut, *Outline*, offered a different kind of window—a window into the artist's inner life. The work in this show was a selection from his larger series of the same name, in which he uses clay to explore personal narrative, especially as it pertains to rites of passage and fatherhood. Each group of high relief tiles was bound by a ceramic frame, which made these compositions appear to be portals or perhaps even religious tableaux. With imagery inspired by illuminated manuscripts, medieval bestiaries, and his young daughter's drawings, these clay "drawings" were both playful and eerie. Schiffman hoped that this exhibition would spark honest conversations, not necessarily about his work, but because viewers felt more comfortable revealing their inner lives after seeing his.

In **Rachel Eng's** installation, she ripped a hole in time, creating a "fissure" in the gallery floor filled with forms referencing *Ediacaran fauna* modeled out of raw clay. These soft-bodied organisms lived on Earth 635 million years ago. By bringing these ancient lifeforms into the present day, Eng invited viewers to contemplate the vastness of geological time and put humanity's relatively short existence into perspective. *Ediacaran fauna* emerged just before the Cambrian explosion, a massive proliferation and diversification of life on Earth. These organisms were unique in that they used and recycled the resources around them, existing in an ecosystem

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Greenwich House Pottery would like to extend our deep appreciation to our students, patrons, staff, and the exhibiting artists and curators. We are grateful for the support from public funds from the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council, the Allan Buitekant Fund for Ceramic Art & Inquiry, the Windgate Foundation, the Hompe Foundation, the Lenore G. Tawney Foundation, the Milton and Sally Avery Arts Foundation, the Maxwell/Hanrahan Foundation, and the support of our parent organization, Greenwich House, Inc. Thanks to Brad Parsons whose excellent installations were instrumental to the success of the exhibitions. A special thanks to Leslie Miller, whose expertise and thoughtfulness have fashioned this eleventh beautiful document, which will serve as a timeless reminder of this important exhibition series.

in which organisms were neither predator nor prey. By creating her *Ediacaran fauna* out of raw clay that she recycled at the end of the exhibition, Eng considered the ephemerality of all living things and how we could learn from both human and non-human regenerative processes.

Ceramics Now is our annual exhibition of work from the previous year's Residency and Fellowship Program. **Heidi Lau** was the first fellowship artist of 2021, spending January and February at our studios. In her research-based artwork in paper and clay, Lau explores nostalgia, memory, and the creation of history. Taoist cosmology influences much of Lau's work, as do folk superstitions and the colonial past of Macau, where she grew up. Lau is particularly interested in burial chambers as a transitional space in which a body teeters between personhood and objecthood. During this fellowship, Lau made a series of large-scale sculptural fountains inspired by the mausoleum of Emperor Qin Shi Huang (259–210 B.C.) in Xian, China.

Meiasha Gray was the next fellowship artist in our studios. Gray works primarily in ceramics and performance art. In her work, Gray is interested in the ephemeral—one of the reasons she is drawn to clay as a material—and in the domestication of space. During her fellowship, Gray furthered a body of work that integrates other media, including photographs, into her clay practice. Often working from memory and family photographs, she made several life-sized sculptures investigating the relationship between people and objects.

Ray (Rachel) Farmer was our summer fellowship artist, working in the studio from June to August of 2021. Farmer uses ceramics and quilts to re-examine histories that get passed down through families, institutions, and pop culture—such as the mythology of the American West, and the artist's own Mormon pioneer ancestry—with a queer, feminist bent. During their fellowship, Farmer developed a body of work that featured miniature sculptures of pioneer women in action in diorama-like scenes that questioned the dominant narratives of the American West.

Kelly Chang was our last resident of 2021. Chang is a New York City-based art director, animator, and designer, who began developing his practice in clay in classes at GHP the spring before his residency. Using his background in computer graphics and 3D modeling and animation, Chang employed 3D printing and scanning, photography, and computer simulation to create his slipcast ceramic sculptures. During his residency, Chang continued to develop a project that considers the replica and its value, or lack thereof. In this series, he reimagined the trash, plastic, and electronics of our current era as valuable artifacts found in the distant future.

We kicked off the fall with the curatorial debut of artist **Edward Salas**, who put together the show *Dirty Work* featuring the ceramic work of twelve interdisciplinary artists: **Itzel Alejandra, Eric Preston Alexander, Daniel Barragán, Sanié Bokhari, Lizzy Chemel, Jill Cohen-Nuñez, Tracy Lee, Andrés Monzón-Aguirre, Didi Rojas, Karen Tepaz, Anastasia Warren, and Jinsik Yoo**. Each of these artists uses the medium of ceramics as a vehicle to illuminate and unpack layered personal histories. Looking forward or backward in time, the artists are working to understand the present and create hybrid artifacts that will help future generations understand our complex histories.

The last exhibition of the year was **Wansoo Kim's** New York City solo-show debut. In this exhibition, Kim joined traditional and contemporary vessel forms with unconventional ornamentation to encourage us to think about metaphysical dichotomies such as what is visible versus invisible, internal versus external, and known versus unknown. Kim inverted what would typically be the inside and the outside of the vessels by embellishing the interiors with hand-painted designs or high reliefs. These designs drew in the viewer, while the height

and narrowness of the vessels restricted full access to them, reminding us to think about what we choose to withhold or divulge in our lives and how much of the world around us is beyond our perception.

The *Ceramics Now* exhibition series is a lens into contemporary American ceramics. It provides an entry point for those newly interested in ceramics, just as it provides valuable perspectives for those who have been immersed in the field for a lifetime. At the end of each exhibition year, we recommit to the goal that drives all of us at Greenwich House Pottery: to support and encourage a diverse range of ceramic art. We know this exhibition series can never be comprehensive, but that limitation makes the series' mission all the more essential, as we reflect on the artists whose work graced our space this past year and we look forward to introducing a new group of artists—and the perspectives they bring—to the Greenwich House Pottery community in the coming year.

Kaitlin McClure is the Gallery and Residency Manager at Greenwich House Pottery.

ELIZA AU



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ELIZA AU

The Architecture of Solace

January 7 – February 4, 2022

STATEMENT

I create forms that act as lines in space and patterns which mirror and replicate each other, seemingly in a dance of artificial mitosis. Working digitally in CAD (computer aided design) affects how I create and view artwork. The liminal space between complexity and order allows room for play and discovery through the rules of algorithms and parametric design. The digital interface has its own inherent surfaces and textures such as the wireframe, pixels and meshes which we experience visually. The planning and production process work in sync with each other, through line drawings in CAD which are 3D printed in plastic and eventually press molded in clay. I am interested in bringing the wireframe surface into the physical world through the processes of craft, such as plaster mold making and press molding clay.

The designs I create have a close relationship to historical ornament, particularly to the pattern motif of the arabesque. I am interested in how this motif draws a parallel between historical Islamic patterns and the contemporary wireframe structure in CAD. The underlying structure of the polar and square grid serves as a framework to create my patterns. Working with the wireframe structure in clay, structure and ornament become inseparable. Flirting with ideas of impossibility by pushing the clay to become planar sheets that are thin, sinuous and perforated, I am able to build structures that reference fluidity and contemporary architecture. The use of the undulating line to define structure and space reflect a larger culture who equates this aesthetic as a metaphor for progress and the future. A meditative rhythm is seen through the repetition of the arabesque in the pattern design and the repetition of the two-dimensional planes. A sense of lightness and effortlessness is created by the regularity of the perforated planes; the objects created seem to be divorced from mass and form as negative space defines the work as much as positive space. Formal dualities are made through color and composition; such as the use of black and white; warm and cool, as well as gradations in the work.

My work investigates how past and present ornament in architecture engages in the idea of sacred space. Ornament and abstraction have a close relationship, ornament acting as visual stimuli and also as a vehicle for social norms and ideals. Historically, architectural ornament within the Islamic mosque drew a connection between infinite repetition and ideas of divinity; in contemporary architecture such as in the work of Mark Foster Gage and Evan Douglass, the fluid line, complexity and ornamentation have re-emerged, without explicit religious ideas, but utopic ideals about society.

I am motivated to create this work as I find elegance, beauty and balance within mathematical relationships and find this works well with the technical challenges of clay. I view my process as similar to solving a mathematical equation. I gain satisfaction from discovering new pathways or proofs to new aesthetic experiences. Because my work is geometrically based, I find working digitally allows me to create an infinite number of variations within an open field for play. My work provides an outlet for my need to discover and participate in the meditative act of making without a direct connection to religious belief. Our epoch is the same as all other epochs before us, using current technology to re-interpret ornament that has come before us and modify their meanings to fit our own purpose. The skeleton may act as a metaphor for ornament; it serves as the backbone of our identity and through abstraction it presents coded meanings of cultural production and values.

BIO

Eliza Au is an artist working in clay using digital fabrication techniques. She earned her MFA from the New York State College of Ceramics at Alfred University and her BFA from the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design. Au has shown her work nationally and internationally, including at: the Appalachian Center for Craft (Smithville, TN; 2021); the Taiwan Ceramic Biennale, (New Tapei City, Taiwan; 2020), and the Korean International Ceramic Biennale (Icheon, Korea, 2019). She has previously attended residencies at the European Ceramic Work Center (Hertogenbosch, NL), the Archie Bray Foundation for the Ceramic Arts (Helena, MT), Greenwich House Pottery, and recently received a McKnight Artist Fellowship to attend a residency at the Northern Clay Center (Minneapolis, MN) in 2022. In 2020, she received an Award of Excellence during the Chrysalis Competition held by the James Renwick Alliance. Her work is in several permanent collections including the Everson Museum of Art and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Originally from Vancouver, Canada, Au is currently based out of Texas where she is an Assistant Professor of Ceramics at the University of North Texas.



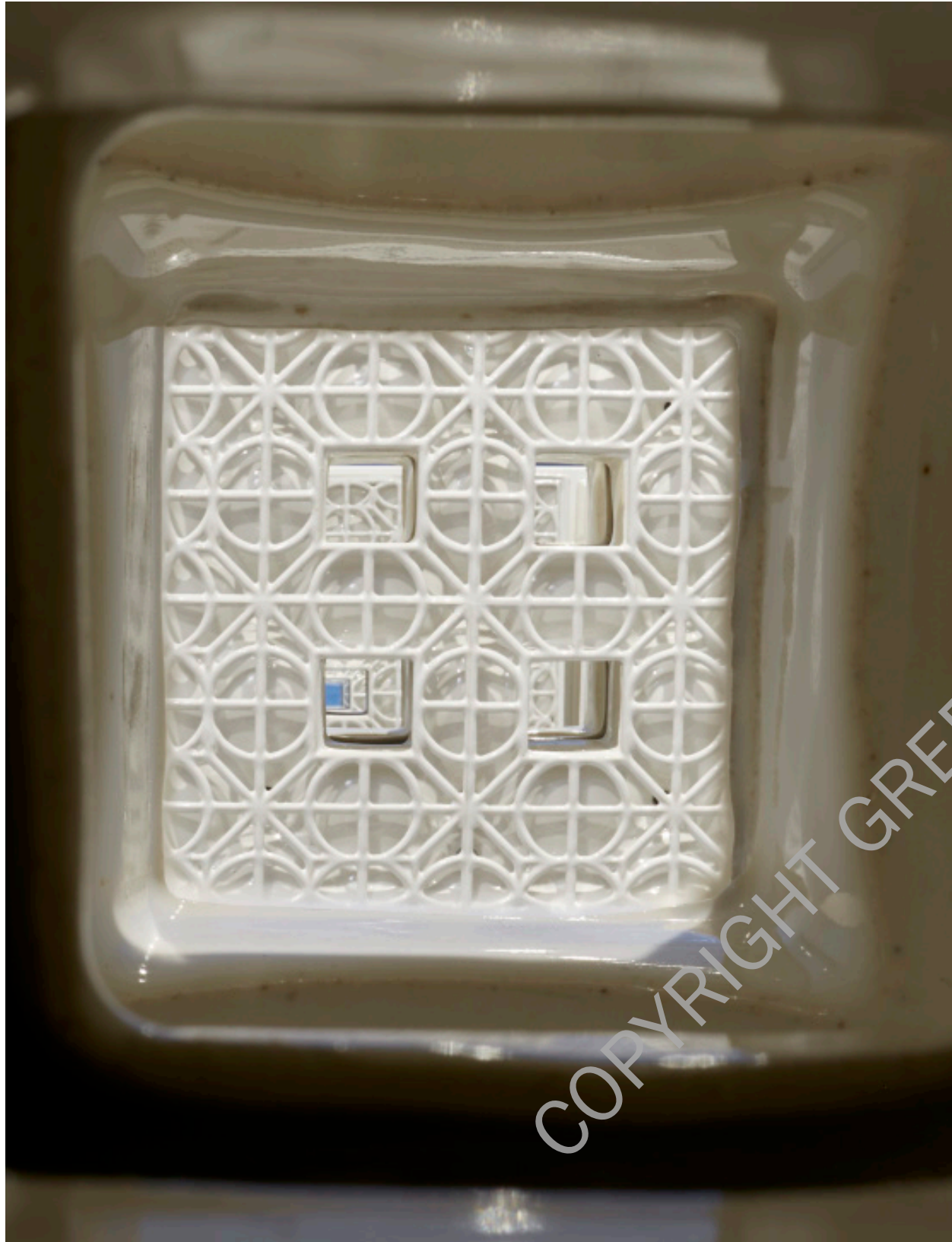












JUDD SCHIFFMAN



JUDD SCHIFFMAN

Outline

February 18 – March 18, 2022

STATEMENT

Using clay as a drawing material, my ceramic wall sculptures are a psychedelic concoction of lived and imagined experiences that ponder the power of our personal stories. As social and political tensions continue to build in the world, there seems to be little room for compromise as we all become more identified with our own story of how things should be. Through exploring personal narrative, my work seeks to look beyond the story in order to find the space where collaboration can happen. The framed narratives open up a common ground where the viewer can enter into dialogue as a participant among the characters, objects, and landscapes.

The content and process of my studio work is informed by my life with my five-year-old daughter, Franny and wife, Athena. As we navigate children's stories, YouTube cartoons, songs, and art history books together, we discover and collaborate on images that I then refine and make out of clay. Utilizing the objects and images that Franny gravitates towards, the textiles Athena makes, and other powerful relics, narratives are composed reflecting the inner life of the contemporary family, rites of passage, and grappling with the complexities of being a father. My work explores themes of masculinity, discovery of self, sexuality, and family, and all the nuanced guilt, confusion, and elation that exist in tandem. Along with relics found in my own domestic environment, depictions of animals in museum collections have become the ideal actors in this drama.

Being a father, I am in the midst of one of the most significant transitions of my life, and my work over the past three years expresses the complexity of the patriarchal, nuclear family system I find myself in, as well as the tenderness and energy I receive through my new family. Raising a young child at its best is a collaborative experience, and my work follows suit. Ideas of authorship and the role of the individual artist are challenged as I copy and skew historical images and objects, and then invite my wife and artist friends into my studio to arrange and re-arrange the installation.

BIO

Judd Schiffman is a Rhode Island-based artist. He has lectured at Harvard University Ceramics and Brown University, and participated in residencies at the Zentrum für Keramik (Berlin, Germany) and Arch Contemporary Ceramics (Tiverton, RI). Schiffman earned his MFA from the University of Colorado, Boulder and his BA from Prescott College. Schiffman's work has been exhibited throughout the United States, including at The Valley (Taos, NM; 2022), KMM Projects (Providence, RI; 2022), Maake Projects (State College, PA; 2021), 1969 Gallery (New York, NY; 2020), and Inman Gallery (Houston, TX; 2020). In 2016 he received an emerging artist award from the National Council for the Education of Ceramic Arts. Schiffman is currently the Visiting Assistant Professor of Ceramics at Providence College.







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RACHEL ENG

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RACHEL ENG

Deliberate Pace

May 20 – June 17, 2022

STATEMENT

I see our environment and landscape as open systems worked on by outside forces, not exclusive of ourselves. My work grapples with topics, such as climate change, land use/development, and their connection to memory. By paying close attention to a small aspect of the system, I work to reveal the whole through an analysis of its parts. Many of the projects I undertake employ clay, video projections, and sounds to create layered pieces. Change, decay, and regeneration are central content to these artworks and comment on life cycles and interconnected impact of humans and the elements. What is defined as 'nature' can be a variety of things, from a parking lot to a garden to a forest. Currently, I am interested in connecting earth's long geologic history to our current condition. Our landscape has been shaped for billions of years, but more recently human decisions have left scars. How can humans learn to have more reciprocal relationships with our planet and each other versus one of extraction?

BIO

Rachel Eng is a Pennsylvania-based artist working in clay, video projection, and sound. Eng grew up exploring the deciduous forests of Rochester, NY. She earned her MFA from University of Colorado Boulder and her BFA from Pennsylvania State University. Eng has shown her work at The Clay Studio (Philadelphia, PA; 2020), Flecker Gallery (Long Island, NY; 2020), and Sykes Gallery (Gettysburg, PA; 2019). She has held residencies at Studio Kura (Itoshima, Japan) and Watershed Center for the Ceramic Arts (Newcastle, ME), among others. Eng was selected as a NCECA Emerging Artist in 2017. She is currently Assistant Professor of Art and Art History at Dickinson College.













CERAMICS NOW



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KELLY CHANG, RAY (RACHEL) FARMER, MEIASHA GRAY, HEIDI LAU

Ceramics Now

July 8 – August 21, 2022

BIOS

Kelly Chang is a New York-based art director, animator, and designer, who is developing his art practice in clay. Using his background in computer graphics and 3D modeling and animation, Kelly employs 3D printing in plastic, 3D scanning, photography, and computer simulation to create his slipcast ceramic sculptures. Kelly earned his BA in art history from the University of California, Santa Cruz and studied computer science at New York University. He was the director of visual effects at FX Networks, as well as a lead computer graphics artist for Oscar and BAFTA-winning creative studio Framestore, and a sculpture production assistant to the artist Matthew Barney. He is currently a board member at Black Ball Projects, a gallery and arts nonprofit based in Brooklyn, New York. His work has been shown at MoMA PS1 (*Greater New York*, 2000).

Ray (Rachel) Farmer is an artist who uses ceramics and quilts to dissect and reimagine stories that get passed down through families, institutions, and pop culture—especially mythologies of the American West, and the artist's own early Mormon ancestry—with a queer, feminist bent. A New York-based artist who grew up in Utah, Farmer has an MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a BFA from Brigham Young University. They have shown work in a number of exhibitions, including at: the Utah Museum of Contemporary Art (Salt Lake City, UT; 2020-21), Granary Arts (Ephraim, UT; 2018 & 2013), Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art (New York, NY; 2017), and A.I.R. Gallery (Brooklyn, NY; 2017, 2013 & 2012). Farmer was a Fellowship Artist at A.I.R. Gallery (2013-14), and has been an artist in residence at Space on Ryder Farm (2019), the Museum of Arts and Design (2016), and Brush Creek Arts (2014).

Meiasha Gray is a Detroit-born, New York-based artist. Gray explores ritualistic activity and the domestication of space and objects through ancestral systems of spirituality. Though not bound to any single material, Gray often works in clay and performance, using evidence and stories of familial communion within black domestic space to inform relationships with various objects, practices and people to attempt contact in moments of desperation, grief, reverence, vengeance, and love. Gray earned a BFA from Sierra Nevada College. She has shown her work at the Holland Project Gallery (Reno, NV; 2019), the Tahoe Gallery at Sierra Nevada College (Incline Village, NV; 2018), the California Ceramic Conference for the Advancement of Ceramic Arts (Davis, CA; 2106-17), and Capital City Arts Initiative (Carson City, NV; 2016-17). She has been a resident artist at Anderson Ranch Arts Center (Snowmass, CO; 2019).

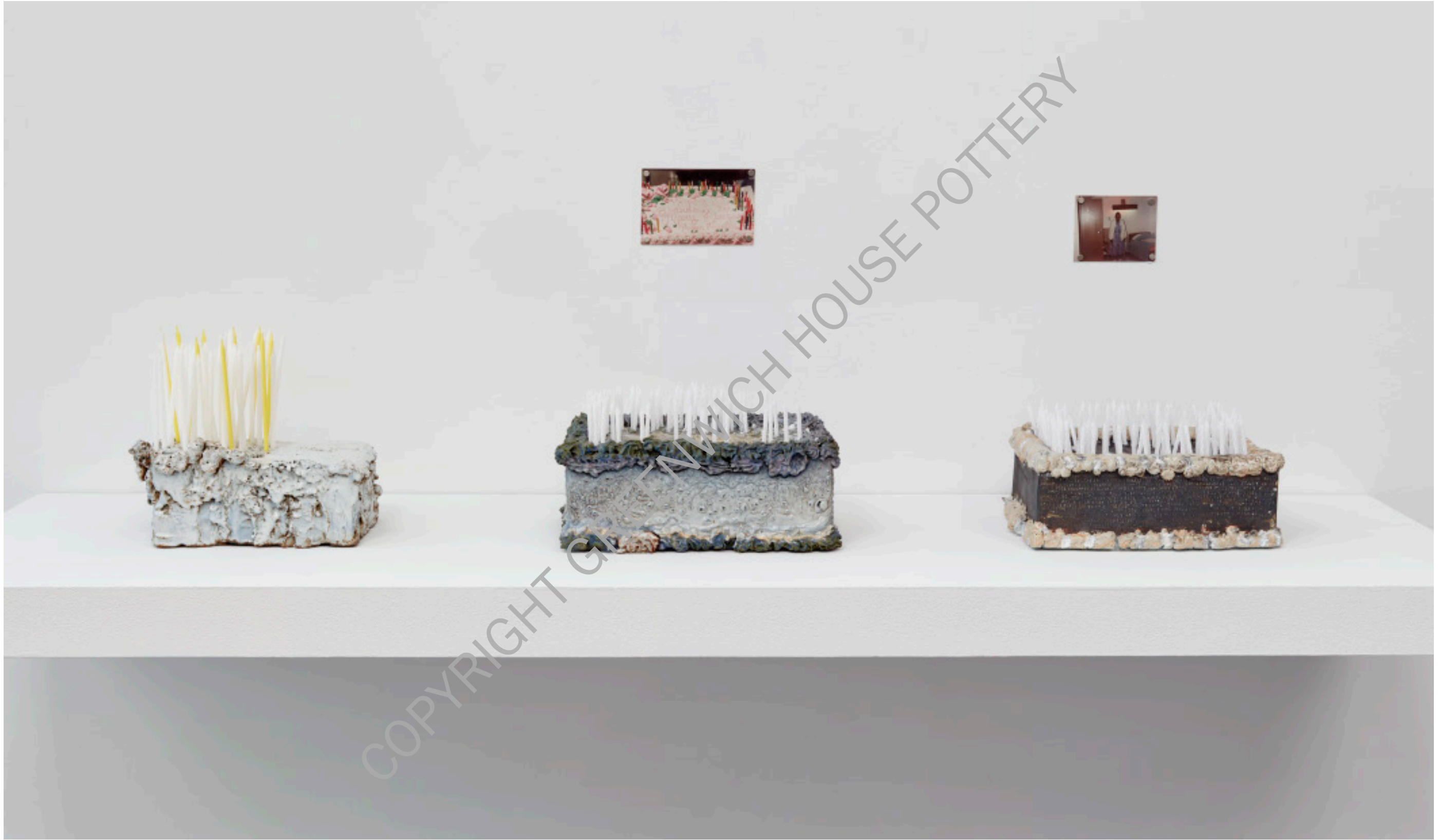
Heidi Lau is a New York City-based artist who grew up in Macau. Her primary materials are paper and ceramic. In her research-based work, Lau explores nostalgia, memory, and the creation of history. Taoist cosmology influences much of her work, as do folk superstitions and Macau's colonial history. Lau earned a BFA from New York University. Her work has been shown internationally, including at the Venice Biennale (Italy; 2019), the Bronx Museum of the Arts (NY; 2017), Macao Museum of Art (China; 2014), and Museum of Chinese in America (New York, NY; 2016). Lau has received a number of awards, including the Colene Brown Art Prize (2019) and the Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters & Sculptors Grant (2015). She has held residencies, including at CSULB Center for Contemporary Ceramics (2020), the Joan Mitchell Center (2018), the Museum of Arts and Design (2017), and the Center for Book Arts (2014), among others.













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DIRTY WORK



ITZEL ALEJANDRA, ERIC PRESTON ALEXANDER, DANIEL BARRAGÁN,
SANIÉ BOKHARI, LIZZY CHEMEL, JILL COHEN-NUÑEZ, TRACY LEE,
ANDRÉS MONZÓN-AGUIRRE, DIDI ROJAS, KAREN TEPAZ,
ANASTASIA WARREN, JINSIK YOO

Curated by EDWARD SALAS

Dirty Work

September 9 – October 21, 2022

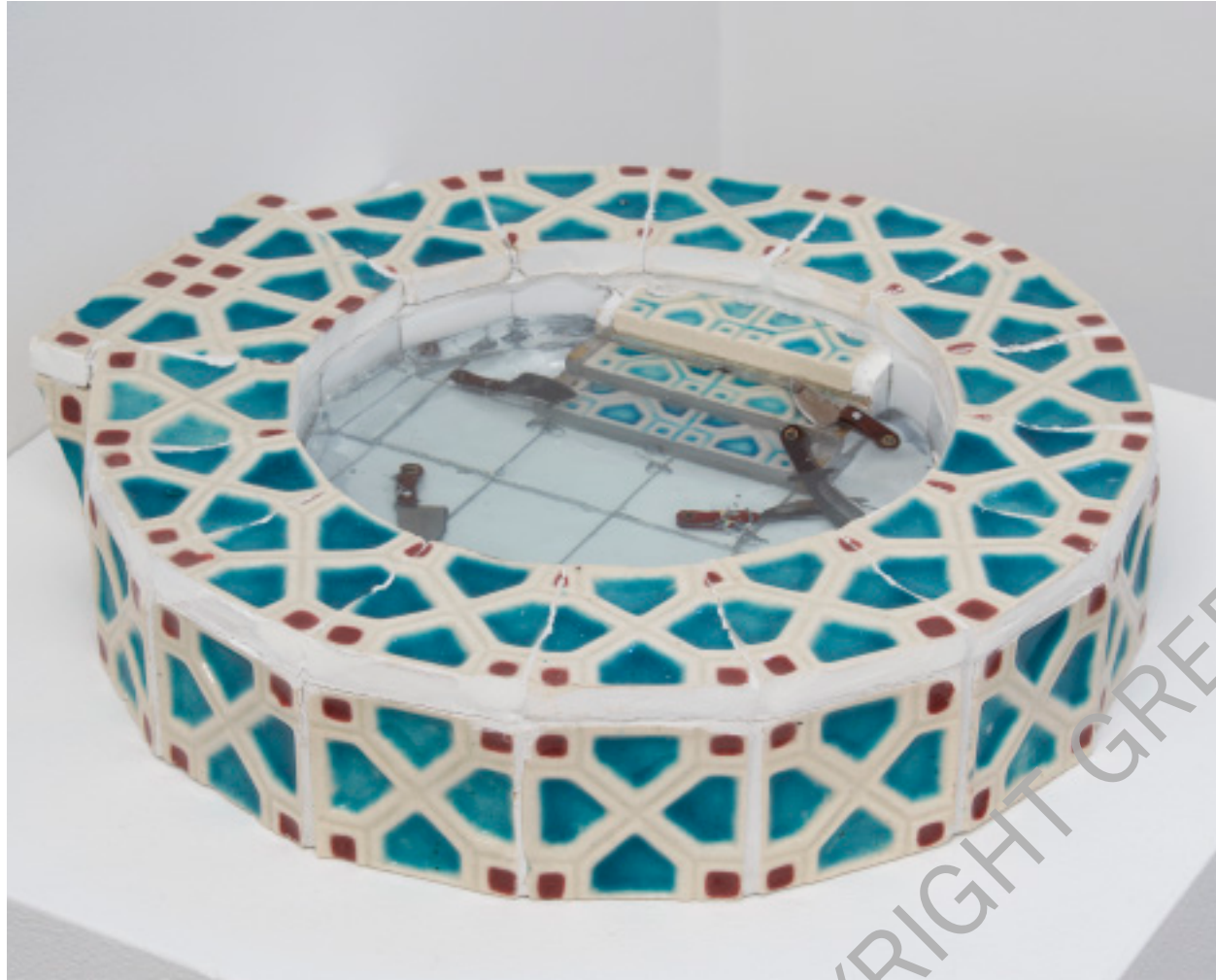
EXHIBITION STATEMENT

Clay is not an easy medium to work with in New York City. It is a material that requires resources that are often scarce like space, kilns, transportation and funds. In a city where histories are constantly being erased and rebuilt, clay can be a medium to unearth the past, make sense of the present and converse with the future. Clay's deep association with the past and its broad history of use by ancient cultures around the world makes it the perfect medium for contemporary artists to mine when engaging their own personal histories. Clay has a memory and the maker's hand is inextricably part of the work. Some artists in this show look back and connect to ancient ways of making and motifs, remixing ideas for the complexities of our contemporary moment. Other artists use ceramics for its malleability, a characteristic that enables them to express the fleeting present. All of the artists in this show are tapping into a medium that holds many histories, making topical objects for the present and relics for the future. This is the dirty work that artists do.









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WANSOO KIM



WANSOO KIM

Wansoo Kim: Vessels

November 4 – December 16, 2022

STATEMENT

In my eyes, the world is composed of both revealed things and hidden things. I interpret my surroundings based on this idea, seeking to realize my ignorance and awareness. With this in mind, I create objects in which dichotomous ideas are present, and use their physically revealed and hidden aspects in order to represent the greater human struggle to see and understand what is hidden from us.

The notion of inside and outside is one of my particular subjects. Upon observing an object or a structure, we see only its external reality. I aim to present the unobservable, often presenting the inner reality of things at the same time as I present the apparent outer reality. In this respect, my works can become a gate leading viewers to an invisible space, counteracting the conception that what we see is everything.

I also question what sustains our daily lives. An individual's beliefs and perceptions are created not only by personal history, memory and experience, but also by society's tradition and culture, accumulated throughout human history. I interpret this invisible background as a spiritual support for individuals by materializing it as physical supports. Thus the idea of verticality and horizontality is another fundamental in my works. I see great value in the physicality of human beings and all structures under the force of the gravity. The ground is horizontal and is our base. We always stand vertically on the ground. On top of legs or columns is the ceiling or the roof, sandwiching us between two horizontal lines. Vertical structures are a symbol representing human beings. I am aware of their struggle to overcome gravity. In this respect I focus on developing and expressing an imagery of verticality, which is a form compiled of vertical structures that I have observed such as a column, the legs of humans and animals, and ordinary table legs.

These ideas become more tangible when they are articulated in formal qualities in the works. Physical dichotomy exists in the works as a natural phenomenon. Masses and spaces, regardless of the shapes and dimensions, are always composed of visible and invisible parts, defined by where we stand and what we perceive. I scrutinize and bridge this with the idea of inside and out, top and bottom, front and back, and vertical and horizontal structures. As I build a three-dimensional form, it naturally generates interior and exterior surfaces as well as vertical and horizontal structures. I am fully aware of these natural occurrences and apply my awareness of these physical dichotomies to my understanding of culture, society and human behavior, correlating ignorance/awareness with hidden/visible.

The works are an assemblage of recognizable and unidentifiable elements, intended to evoke an environment where realism and surrealism coexist. Through both distant interaction with the works and personal closer examination, the viewer's accessibility to the space and experience is restricted. By creating this experience for the viewer, I propose to question our perceptions, our beliefs, our ignorance and our awareness.

BIO

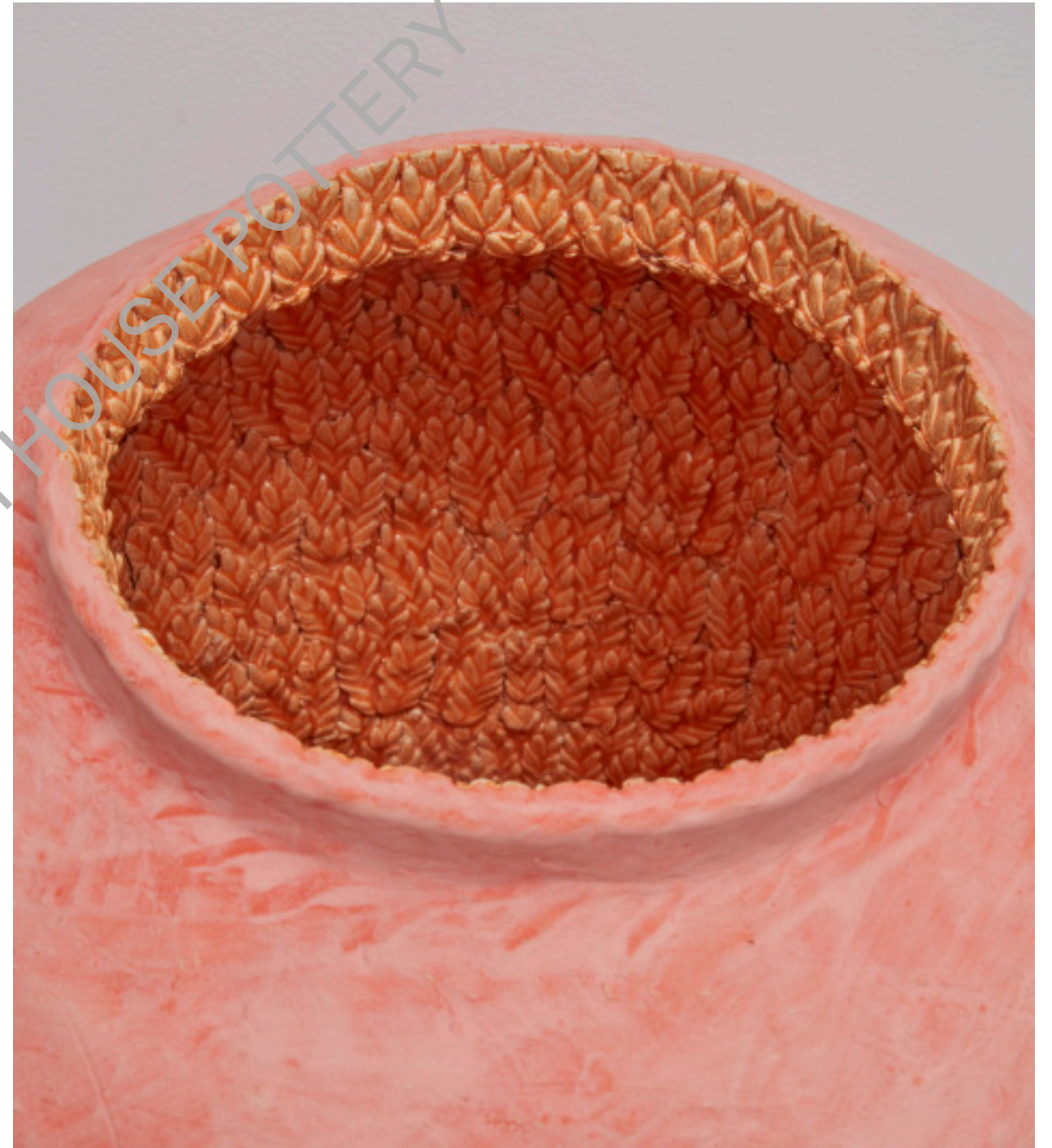
Wansoo Kim is a Tennessee-based artist who earned his MFA from the University of Nebraska and his BFA from Seoul National University of Science and Technology. Recent solo exhibitions include Watkins College of Art at Belmont University (Nashville, TN; 2022), The New Gallery at Austin Peay State University (Clarksville, TN; 2021), and E. Bronson Ingram Studio Arts Center (Nashville, TN; 2020). He is an assistant professor of ceramics at Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee.







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