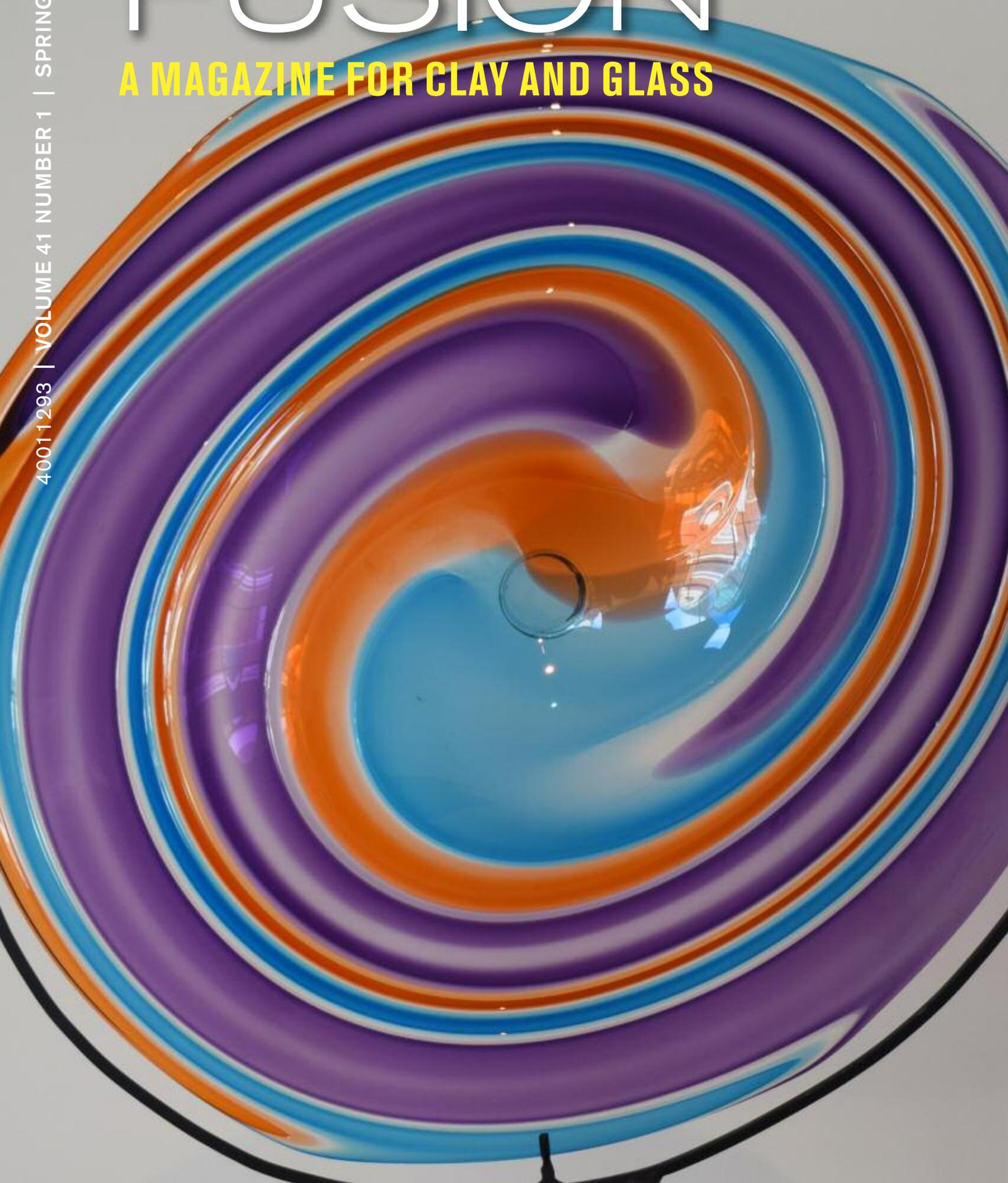


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FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS



FUSION Conference – June 9-11, 2017



Sarah Pike



Mariko Paterson

FUSION's 2017 Conference will celebrate Canada's 150th birthday with a fantastic all Canadian artist line-up at Fanshawe College in London, Ontario.

New this year is an all-day Friday event, in addition to the regular 2-day weekend featured artists.

We will kick-off the weekend with a lecture and demonstrations by Paula Murray on Friday. Saturday and Sunday will feature Mariko Paterson and Sarah Pike demonstrating and discussing their work.

Our meal menus will feature Canadian cuisine.

As always, the Conference will bring delegates together for a chance to network and visit; meet with suppliers; take part in FUSION's exciting silent mug auction; and take home a piece of great Canadian art.

For more information and to register, visit: www.clayandglass.on.ca.



Paula Murray

FUSION

A MAGAZINE FOR CLAY AND GLASS

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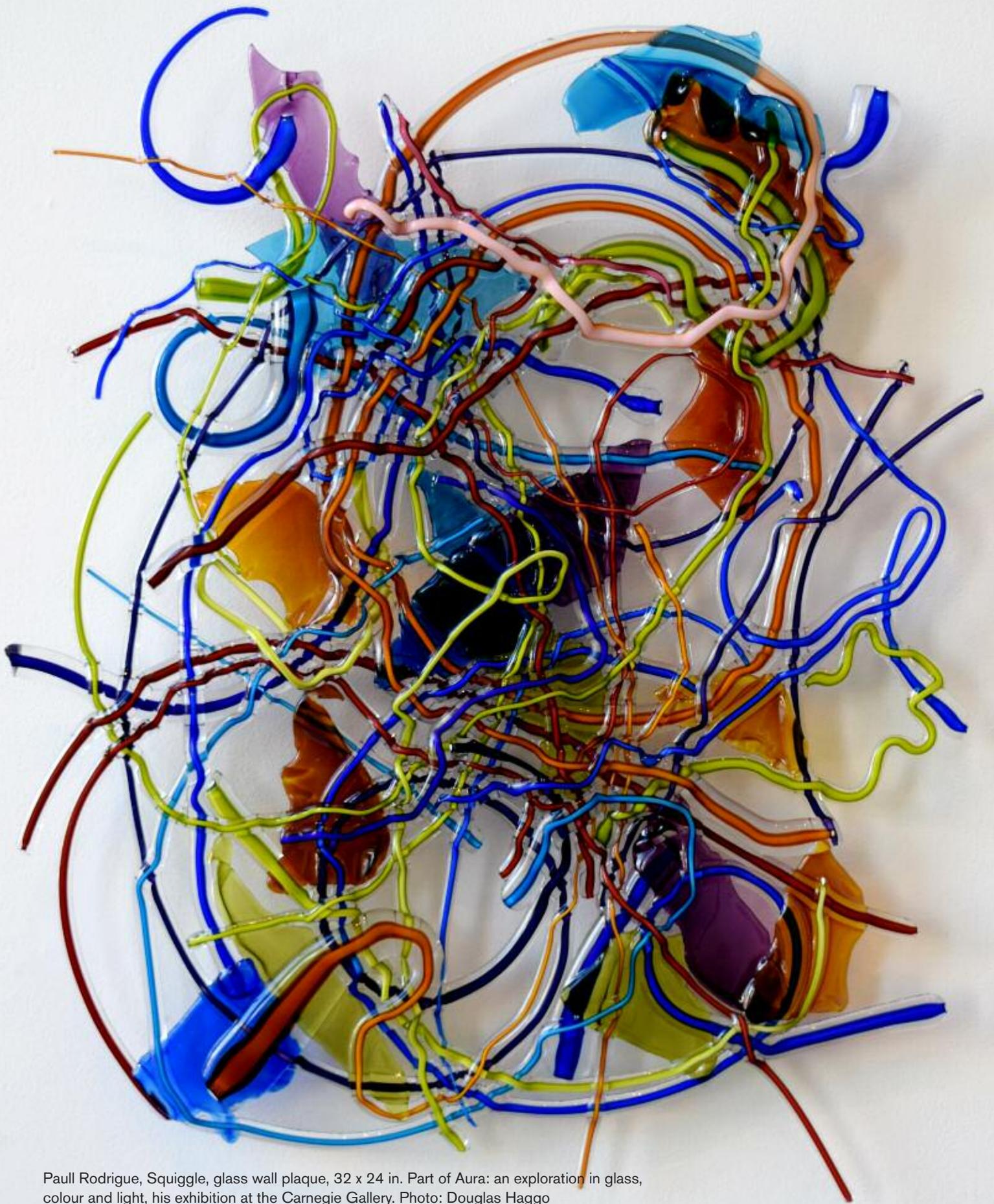
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Paul Rodrigue: Round & Round
Blown Glass Incalmo platter
27 x 23 in. Platter itself
with stand 7 ft tall
2017



Paul Rodrigue, Squiggle, glass wall plaque, 32 x 24 in. Part of Aura: an exploration in glass, colour and light, his exhibition at the Carnegie Gallery. Photo: Douglas Haggio



Paul Rodrigue, Migration, Blown Glass wall mounted installation, 18ft wall, 2017.

Paul Rodrigue

Aura: An exploration in glass, colour and light

Regina Haggio

Carnegie Gallery, 10 King St W, Dundas, ON
February 3 – 26, 2017

Paull Rodrigue says people have a habit of getting out of his way whenever he picks up one of his glass sculptures. I speak with him as he's setting up his exhibition at the Carnegie Gallery. It's called Aura: an exploration in glass, colour and light.

I'm enchanted by his creations. Some look quite sturdy, others more fragile. They reflect, absorb, shimmer and cast coloured shadows depending on how and when light strikes them. All of them glow with punchy and sultry colours. Colour is Rodrigue's passion. So is the need "to do something different," he tells me; that includes experimenting with various glass-making methods.

Rodrigue has been blowing glass for about 20 years. He

works out of a studio in Greensville, Ontario with Tobias Moriarty. Rodrigue bought the studio space from glass artist Cheryl Takacs. Both Rodrigue and Takacs studied with the late Shirley Elford, glass artist extraordinaire.

He's just finished polishing "Magenta," a vessel that is about 25 inches tall. It boasts an oval body that narrows toward the top. Rodrigue says he tried a traditional Italian glass-blowing technique called *incalmo* that involves welding, or fusing, one body of glass to another. Viewing "Magenta" from one side gives you red, orange, blue and green loops and arcs in the foreground. You are also, however, able to see what colours lie in the background through the colours in the foreground. This gets you what



Rodrigue calls bonus colours, because those in the background are transformed when seen through the foreground ones. Then walk around the work and repeat the process to get more bonus colours.

Compared with the earth-bound sturdiness of “Magenta,” a series of three wall plaques looks more fragile. “Their vivid colours, bold lines, fluidity and paint like brush strokes are what I enjoy the most,” he says. Each piece features canes, or rods, of glass twisted into long and short coloured lines and small flat shapes. Lines and shapes overlap and tangle, creating a strong sense of movement. The titles, “Scribble,” “Splat,” and “Squiggle,” suggest spontaneity and play.

Rodrigue applied a caneworking technique that thrives on spontaneity. “I pull a length of cane, bending some and swirling others, then assemble in the kiln,” he says. “Due to the different heights of the canes, I cannot predict how they will lay out once the kiln goes up in temperature and the canes all slump and bend into their resting spots.” Rodrigue says he gets a kick out of this kind of approach. “Once I turn the kiln on, it’s beyond my control.”

And he’s no slouch when it comes to recycling his leftovers, the bits of glass that get removed when the shape of a piece is firmed up. Rodrigue’s “Shadow Box Series” incorporates the gorgeous leftovers into small, highly animated and abstracted compositions.

Regina Haggio, art historian, public speaker, curator and former professor at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, teaches at the Dundas Valley School of Art and writes a weekly column about art for The Hamilton Spectator.

Paull Rodrigue, Magenta, free-standing glass vessel, about 25 inches tall. Part of Aura: an exploration in glass, colour and light, his exhibition at the Carnegie Gallery. Photo: Douglas Haggio



Ann Cummings, *Rhamnus Cathartica*, 2017, ceramic, 9 3/4 x 14 x 9 in.

Ann Cummings: *Rare Birds and Strange Bedfellows*

Review by Diana Reitberger

David Kaye Gallery,
Toronto, ON
February 2-26, 2017

Ann Cummings has been working with clay for almost four decades. I first reviewed her work back in 1982, when she participated in a group show focused on plates at Prime Gallery in Toronto. While Cummings' work has taken many directions over time, she has always remained firmly committed to the open vessel form, be it plates, platters or baskets. So, it was quite exciting to walk into the David Kaye Gallery and see the sculptural work that she created over the past year.

Rare Birds and Strange Bedfellows is the title chosen by Cummings to provide context for the thirteen works on display. Comprised of four wall pieces and nine small sculptures, the title could not be more a precise description for the two distinct groupings of work, both inspired by Cummings' very personal experiences with landscape, memory and dreams.

The first sculptural grouping is firmly rooted in the 18th century Rococo style. The name Rococo itself is a



Ann Cummings, *Sorbus Americana*, 2017, ceramic, 13 1/2 x 12 1/2 x 9 in.



Ann Cummings, *Acer Canadensis*, 2017, ceramic, 10 3/4 x 16 1/2 x 10 3/4 in.

combination of the French word *rocaille* used to describe a popular form of ornamentation using shells and pebbles for the decoration of garden grottos, and the preceding Baroque period. The style was characterized by a playful and asymmetrical approach to decoration with the use of natural motifs such as shells, and Cummings very much takes advantage of all of these elements.

Rhamnus Cathartica is directly inspired by a wonderful Derby Pickle or Sweetmeat stand from c. 1765 in the Gardiner Museum in Toronto. Composed of molded flowers, shells, leaves, animals and birds, it is a delightful visual composition, evoking many happy memories for Cummings. An azure glaze trickles down the piece, pooling on flat surfaces and in shell receptacles much like flowing water. This idyllic landscape is not only a nod to the Rococo style, but the blue glaze relates directly to Cummings' Greek heritage.

Another striking work is *Populus Tremuloides* which is slightly smaller in scale but more resolved when viewed in the round. A miniature horse stands proudly atop a half shell, balanced opposite a small container created by shells with a tiny porcelain flower at its centre. This is the most personal work in the exhibition and is an homage to the artist's late husband, Frank, who worked at a farm that offered therapeutic riding lessons to children and adults with disabilities and special needs. The tiny flowers which are randomly placed around the sculpture are embellished with flecks of gold glaze, further conveying a heightened sense of preciousness and importance. The six pieces in this collection are imagined landscapes of beauty and wonder – a veritable Garden of Eden before the fall.

And then there is the fall. A series of five works entitled *Acer Canadensis* sharply diverge from the Rococo style and provide the "Strange Bedfellows" portion of the exhibition.

Cummings explained this abrupt change in direction as a direct response to the election of Donald Trump in November 2016. She was deeply affected by his stance as a climate change denier. She channeled her deepest fears and nightmares into these pieces, which clearly reflect her angst about the future.

Acer Canadensis is the lone in-the-round sculptural piece in this sequence, comprised of a mound of white clay covered in deep grooves left by the artist's hand. Its shape alludes to the actual landscape where Cummings literally lives at the top of a hill. A tangle of fragile branches fashioned from black clay are scattered at the top, seemingly propping up a small open vessel which has the feeling of a receptacle for sacrifice. Small birds (some dead) are entangled in the branches. On her walks, Cummings often finds dead animals, mostly the result of the natural cycle of survival of the fittest. However, this

piece becomes a potent symbol of the fragility of our ecosystems. The wall pieces (*Acer Canadensis I – IV*) continue this theme – having been pared down to just a tangle of branches, largely burying the menagerie of animals entirely. I found these pieces more satisfying visually because of their simplicity.

These pieces represent new territory for Cummings. She purposely has covered the clay base and animals with super white slip and a clear glaze, providing a stark contrast with the black clay branches. During the firing, the branches turned a dark brown and Cummings chose not to cover them with a black slip to maintain the textural quality of the clay. I don't find that this detracts from her original intent in the slightest.

It speaks volumes that Cummings admits to avoiding politics when it comes to her work, but she felt compelled to do so for this exhibition. Changing direction in the middle of preparing for the exhibition was a brave act, and it has resulted in the creation of the most important work she has done over the past five years. Just as the 18th century Derby dish is a symbol of the social mores, tastes and values of the time, so do these pieces reflect our turbulent times on a very intimate scale in a very disturbing way.

Diana Reitberger is an avid collector of Canadian Ceramics. She lives in Toronto and works in the Performing Arts.



Ann Cummings,
Acer Canadensis III, 2017,
ceramic, 9 x 8 x 3 1/4 in.

All images: Ann Cummings

Carole Epp, To Each Their Share, 6 x 3.5 x 3.5 in.



call and response: The Ceramic Practice of Carole Epp

Chiho Tokita



8 x 8 x 0.5 in.



13 x 7 x 0.5 in.



9 x 9 x 1 in.

"Do I have the right to tell these stories?" Carole is getting ready for a show in Florida and is grappling with the issue of cultural appropriation, thinking about current events that are important to her, but asking herself, are these hers to tell? How does she approach Black Lives Matter and LGBTQ issues in her practice as a "white heterosexual upper-middle class woman" who "cares about everything!"? She is mindful of how telling someone else's story can become taking over their story, and a presumption of speaking about an experience that is not her own. She is a vivacious person who immediately welcomes you into what is going on in her head and the issue she is trying to reconcile. Carole and I had scheduled a time to talk on the phone, wedged between the drop-off and pick-up of her youngest son. Carole Epp has been chosen by *Ceramics Monthly* and *Pottery Making Illustrated* as their 2017 Ceramic Artist of the Year, where she is featured in the *Ceramic Arts 2017 Yearbook*. It seemed only right that we take the opportunity to spotlight her practice on home turf. No doubt to those who know Carole's blog, *Musing About Mud*, her contribution to the wider ceramic community is indisputable. According to Ben Carter, an American potter and the host of a ceramic podcast, *The Tales of a Red Clay Rambler*, it is one of the most visited sites in ceramics. If that were not enough, another project that she recently initiated with Mariko Paterson was *Make and Do*.

Launched in 2016, it started as a web-based collective of Canadian ceramic makers. Still evolving and redefining itself, Carole says it will be rebranded in the upcoming future as a place for more broadly promoting Canadian ceramics, expanding on the idea behind the directory of Canadian ceramics that currently exists. She hopes that it will eventually offer more opportunities for involvement, so stay tuned.

A native of Regina, Saskatchewan, Carole earned a BFA with distinction in ceramics from the University of Regina, studying with Ruth Chambers, Jack Sures and Rory Macdonald. With the original intention of studying painting, she switched to ceramics realizing that she enjoyed making objects. Interested in the way slip casting allowed her to transform common everyday objects, her ceramic practice at that time focused on installation work addressing concern over genetically modified food and the struggles of smaller independent farms against the power of large farm corporations. Moving to Edmonton after graduation, she worked in the contemporary art world for a few years and decided that she wanted to make work that could be approached by a broader audience, to make work that "met people half way." Intrigued by the ideas that Janet DeBoos was exploring within functional ceramics, she went on to earn an MFA at Australian National University, studying with DeBoos and Greg Daly. Returning to Canada, she and her husband live in

Saskatoon with two young sons. With a studio located in the basement of her home, Carole constructs a practice working within the parameters of a family life, in what can be described as a catch-as-catch-can method.

While some artists have a clear singularity of focus in their practice, others incorporate seemingly divergent interests. I was curious about Carole's practice as it explored two distinct bodies of work, and as such, intrigued about the relationship between the two - whether and how they inform each other, and if there was an underlying framework that would explain a connection.

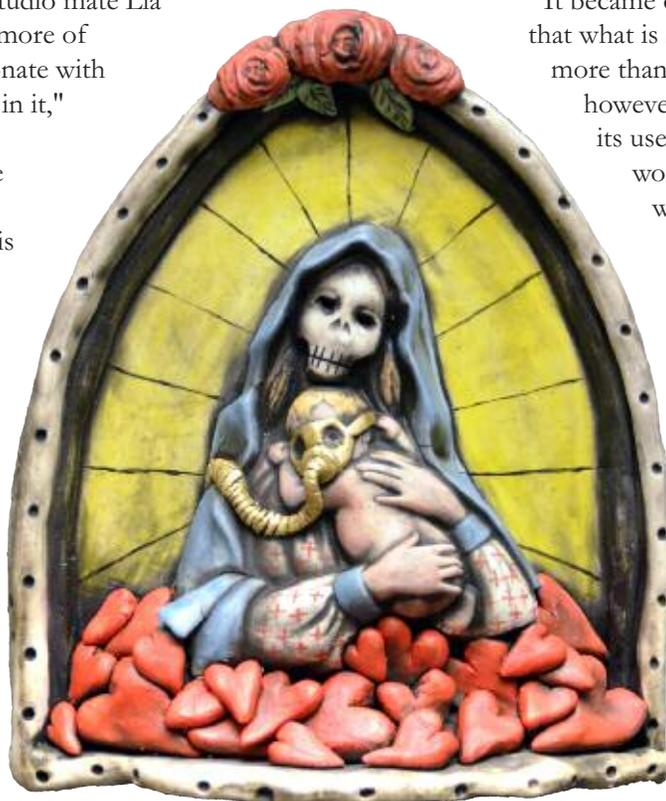
In one series of sculptural work, slip-cast Hummel figurines are recast in vignettes that upon closer examination belie their seemingly sweet exterior. Hummel figurines were manufactured in Germany during the 1930s and are based on pastoral drawings of children by Berta Hummel, which became very popular in the United States after World War II. Seeing the original figurines as "propaganda for idealized humanity," Carole juxtaposes their idyllic content with harsher realities. As social and political commentary, the sculptural body of her practice addresses what is disturbing and dysfunctional about contemporary society. The works are responses to current events and to her own personal narrative, looking at the ways in which suffering exists - the ways we hurt each other and ourselves. Learning during her time at graduate school (thanks to her studio mate Lia Tajcnar) that she needed to put more of herself in the work for it to resonate with others, "to have some humanity in it," her figurative work attempts to address social issues through the lens of her own life rather than presenting itself as a placard. It is the irony of finding the universal through the particular. In *At All Cost*, using the iconic image of the Madonna and Child, the work depicts a blond baby with a gas mask being held by a woman, surrounded by a mound of heart shapes. The work speaks to her experience of parenthood and a maternal desire to "save my son (at the time when she had only one) at all cost" in what is implied

as an inhospitable environment. As well, it speaks to the disheartening disparity in the lives of children, where some are saved while others (the mounds of small red hearts) are not, alluding to issues of privilege. Looking at the work, I read it as a succinct wry statement on maternal martyrdom, engulfed as it were, by (so much) sweetness.

Carole Epp's functional body of work, on the other hand, eschews the world's woes and offers idyllic snapshots of life. As she explains, her functional line was born of wanting to make pots for her first son, and grew from finding an interested audience and market. She found that her functional work offered a refreshingly simple yet equally powerful social value of making people smile. Selling her work at craft fairs, she was intrigued by the reaction that the work elicited from people. As Carole states, she is often amazed by the power of simple acts, acts that may seem trivial but in fact have deeper effects. She views her functional work, no less than her sculptural figurines, as conceptual. She sees the practice of making handmade objects as an implicit critique of the disposable, consumerism-oriented culture, and as such, a political act. Echoing William Morris, understanding the practice of functional work as a form of social critique, subversion through an embodiment of alternative values, seems to still be a sentiment that is implied by many a functional maker when they speak of the 'handmade.'

It became clear from our conversation that what is meaningful to Carole's practice, more than the objects themselves, however carefully crafted they are, is its use as a tool for dialogue. The work is the medium through which she communicates her values, at times explicitly and at other times more implicitly, but in both, as a way to engage in a conversation about the human condition. As she says, the two distinct bodies of work are in fact "answering the same question," which is in essence, "how can we be better people in this world?"

Chiho Tokita is a Toronto based studio potter.



Carole Epp, *At All Cost*, 6 x 6 x 2 in.



Carole Epp, What Dreams May Come, 8 x 7.5 x 4 in.

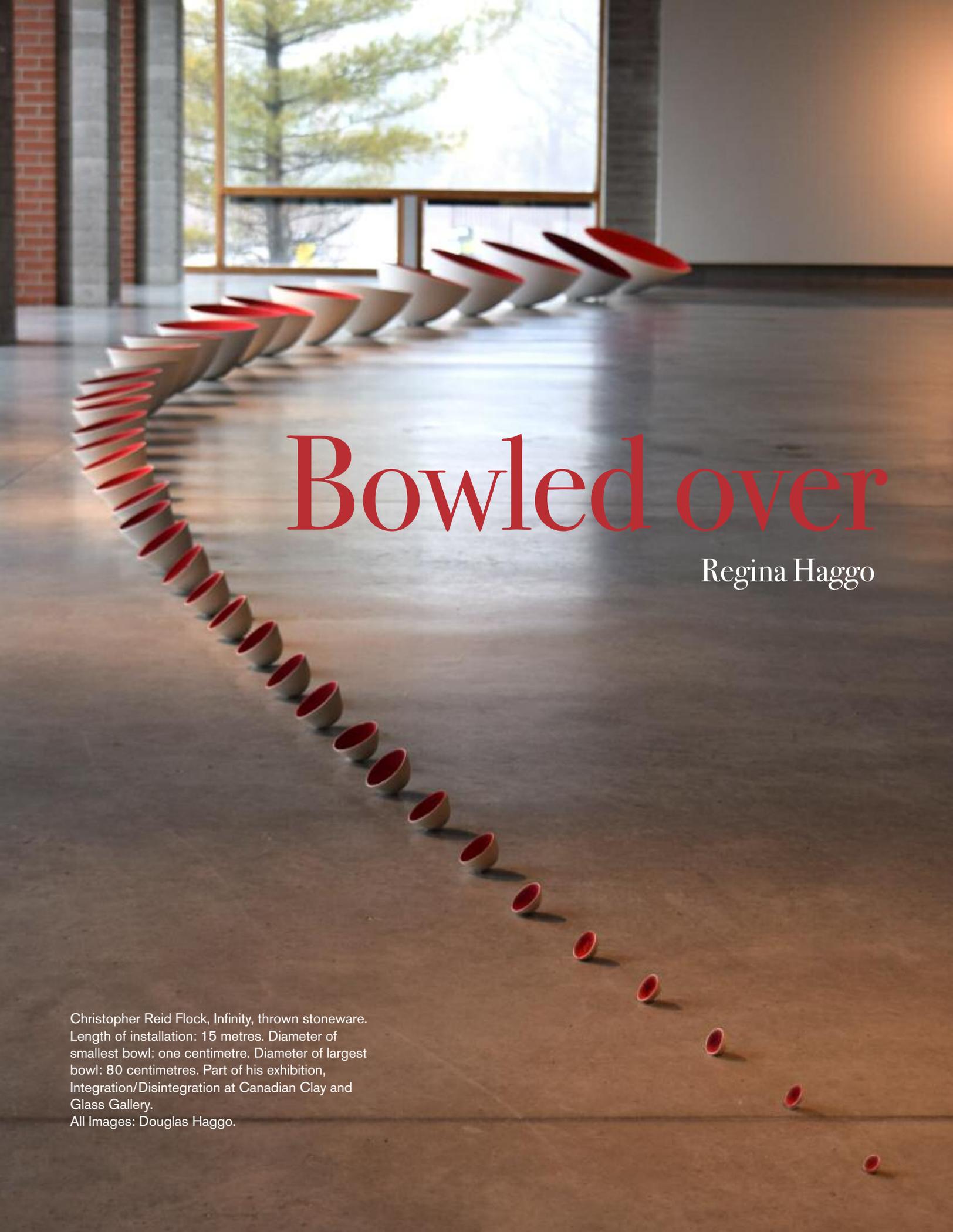


Carole Epp, At That Point It Wasn't About Choice, 12 x 7.5 x 5 in.



Carole Epp, Dance Me to the End of Love, 10 x 5 x 5 in.

All Images: Carole Epp



Bowled over

Regina Haggio

Christopher Reid Flock, *Infinity*, thrown stoneware.
Length of installation: 15 metres. Diameter of
smallest bowl: one centimetre. Diameter of largest
bowl: 80 centimetres. Part of his exhibition,
Integration/Disintegration at Canadian Clay and
Glass Gallery.
All Images: Douglas Haggio.

Only in your wildest dreams could you describe what Christopher Reid Flock creates as pots to put things in. The Hamilton artist's ceramic sculptures were on show in *Integration/Disintegration* at Waterloo's Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery.

At once sparse and stunning, the exhibition was arranged into seven parts, comprising Flock's most recent installation work and some of his earlier pieces that show us how he got to where he is now.

Some of my favourite pieces were "Infinity," "Integration/ Disintegration Cup Saucies," "Jomon Squeeze Toy," and "Twelve Moments."

For the piece titled "Infinity," Flock made 39 stoneware bowls on the wheel. Each one boasts a red interior, a white exterior and a wide mouth rising from a narrow bottom. The best way, I found, to experience this installation was to walk along the curve and count the bowls. That drew your attention to changing sizes and the way the bowls leaned.

The bowls lay on the floor in a curve, increasing in size from one end of the line to the other; the smallest measures about one centimetre in diameter. The smallest bowls leaned towards the window, as though they were seeking the light. Neighbouring bowls stood upright. The biggest ones leaned away from the window.

"The symbolism behind 39 bowls represents the age at which I came back to Canada from Japan, at the age of 39," Flock tells me. "In some regards, it felt like an infinity being away. The last bowl, 80 centimetres in diameter, begins to share the volume of richness and capability to hold content."

The orderly arrangement of "Infinity" contrasted with a more impassioned approach in "Integration/ Disintegration Cup Saucies." Forty stoneware forms, each different in shape, hung on a white wall, casting shadows. All the forms were an intense red. This united them. "The red forms are to symbolize the passion and heat of the moment in creating and realizing the simple form's potential to be engaging and passionate," Flock explains. Each form suggests a familiar shape like a cup and saucer with tendrils, or ribbons, all stuck together, crushed or pulled apart.

"In my first year, my 40th, back in Canada, I felt a sense of a loss of self but also felt like I was becoming

part of something. This is where the nuance of integrating and disintegrating came to light," says Flock, who is now 45. "There are 40 integrating disintegrating cup saucies starting with very rigid forms at the top of the wall flowing through the gravity of space and time and closer to the floor rippling apart and eventually becoming and disintegrating into sand."

The "Jomon Squeeze Toy" installation in a smaller room takes its inspiration from toys, not vessels. "Every maker's development is similar to a child playing with a favourite toy," Flock says. The nonflexible squeeze toys, in red, blue and yellow — the three primary colours — are most definitely oversized. Walking around them in a small space you might consider how big the being is who plays with these. Is it possessive of its toys — and looking over your shoulder?

"12 Moments" offered a dozen teapots Flock built from 1998 to 2015. The creative progression is striking. The earlier examples recall proper Japanese tea pots, the later ones are wonderfully wilder.

Regina Haggio, art historian, public speaker, curator and former professor at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, teaches at the Dundas Valley School of Art and writes a weekly column about art for *The Hamilton Spectator*.



Christopher Reid Flock, detail of *Integration/Disintegration Cup Saucies*, a five-metre-high wall installation of thrown stoneware, vitrified forms enhanced with acrylic paint.

Christopher Reid Flock
Integration/Disintegration
Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery
25 Caroline St. N., Waterloo, ON
January 15 to March 19, 2017



Christopher Reid Flock, Jomon Squeeze Toys, red, blue and yellow, slipcast stoneware, 49 x 18 x 33 in. Part of his exhibition, Integration/Disintegration at Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery.



Christopher Reid Flock, detail of 12 Moments (last two teapots in series). Part of his exhibition, Integration/Disintegration at Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery.



Christopher Reid Flock,
Integration/Disintegration Cup
Saucies, a five-metre-high wall
installation of thrown stoneware,
vitrified forms enhanced with
acrylic paint. Part of his exhibition,
Integration/Disintegration at
Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery.



Shirley Clifford; Orange lustre vessel, 4.5in. h.

Tony Clennell; Large bowl, 18 in. diameter.

Kayo O'Young; Matte white bowl, 7 in. diameter.

Interior of Shane Norrie Contemporary Gallery.

Bookmarks

Shane Norrie

At the risk of sounding cliché, I feel that things happen for a reason. People move in and out of your life with purpose, marking beginnings and ending chapters, making your story interesting and full - adding unique pages. And your story has different chapters too: personal, creative, or professional. It is what you learn from these experiences, and how you react to them, that steers your path and moves your story forward. We are here for only a short time, and after all, how we spend our days is ultimately up to us.

I have great respect for creative people. People who make their living from their art, I feel, are some of the most fortunate that I know. They are generous, humble, open, and genuine people. These individuals are able to spend their days, often in quiet solitude, creating objects that bring joy and beauty to everyday life and to the lives of complete strangers. Their work has the ability to make each day better, just by the act of tapping into something that is inside of them to create an object that is completely and totally unique... something people will eventually acquire and live with every day. The fact that a potter or painter gives a 'piece' of themselves, based on their life experiences and education, and puts it out into the world to form a new dialogue somewhere else intrigues me. Artists and craftspeople you have never met can impact your life in a positive way, on a regular basis.

Collecting art bookmarks the pages of our stories.

Our home is filled with work from many artists; some from people I know personally and some by people who I have never met. As I look around our home, I see pieces that we purchased to mark a special occasion or event, or those that inadvertently remind me of a good or bad time in my life. Much the same way that listening to a song from years ago can transport you back decades in an instant, many of these pieces are more than just objects in our home; they mark a page in my story.

A series of orange lustre raku vases sits proudly on a glass shelf of my home. They were made by my dear friend Shirley Clifford. These objects remind me of a time when I was a teenager; a time when I wasn't sure who I was and where I fit in the world. Shirley was one of my first pottery teachers and was the most encouraging person to me while I was experimenting with clay, always offering advice, studio space, glaze recipes, and critiques whenever I

'One of the greatest things about being an artist is, as you get older, if you keep working hard in relationship to what you want the world to be and how you want it to become, there is a history of interesting growth that resonates with different moments in your life.'

– Catherine Opie

needed them. This experience set the directional compass for my future and these orange lustre vases are the bookmarks for this chapter. Shirley Clifford remains an important part of my gallery and my life, and was the very first artist that I approached to be involved.

Atop my kitchen counter is a quiet matte white porcelain bowl by Kayo O'Young. This piece was given to me as a gift by my newly-met partner almost twenty years ago. I had just graduated college and we were living in Toronto, where I was working as a graphic designer. The bowl was \$80 and twenty years ago, that bowl was an extravagance. This is one of my most prized possessions and I would, as they say, rush in to save it if my home were on fire. Not necessarily because of the ceramic piece itself, but because of the chapter that it marks in my life. Kayo O'Young has recently re-emerged in my life, this time as an artist that we are proud to represent in the gallery.

A very large wood-fired bowl by Tony Clennell sits atop a buffet in my dining room. I purchased it a number of years ago, and it reminds me of an important time when I feel that I veered off course. Although it was a misdirected time in my life, I feel it was an important chapter. The chapter in which I purchased this piece has long since ended but the piece remains in my home, where I see it every day. It quietly permeates and guides my present decisions. Seeing this piece reminds me of that past, foggy time in my life. Tony Clennell has been a wonderful supporter of the gallery, and one who I feel will be an important part of it for as long as it exists.

Artists and craftspeople have an invaluable unique ability. They enhance people's daily lives by simply doing good work, and offering it out to the world. It's one reason that I opened a commercial gallery; to help others discover beautiful objects, to add beauty to their lives, to positively impact the lives of artists, and to make wonderful friends in the process. I hope to never forget that if it weren't for art and artists, my creative, personal, and professional life would have been, and in the future, could be, very different.

Shane Norrie is a ceramic artist and painter located in Stratford, Ontario. In April, 2016, he opened 'Shane Norrie Contemporary' a commercial gallery and working studio. His goal is to represent established and emerging artists, with a focus on fine craft and painting. Visit www.sncgallery.com for a complete list of artists currently represented by the gallery.

FUSION Winter Workshop with Bryan Hopkins

Chris Snedden



Bryan Hopkins, Vase, 2016, porcelain, platinum luster, 11 in. tall



Bryan Hopkins, Bowl, 2017, porcelain, platinum luster, 13 in. wide



Bryan Hopkins, Vase, 2016, porcelain, 16 in. tall



Egg Cups, 2017, porcelain, 2 in. tall

Images: Bryan Hopkins

Porcelain was once described to me as “pretentious mud,” and having tried various porcelain clay bodies, I tended to agree. There seemed to be very few porcelain bodies I tried that, when you put it somewhere, it actually stayed. It was fussy, unforgiving, and I didn't have time for that; I was in a hurry. That has changed for me. I never pictured myself working with porcelain, and now, thanks to the FUSION Winter Workshop with Bryan Hopkins, I am going to explore this sumptuous material more.

Hosted by the Mississauga Potters' Guild, makers from Ontario gathered for a stimulating weekend to hear about Bryan's journey with porcelain during a Friday evening presentation, and throughout the weekend at this participatory workshop. As is usual at events like this, there were potters attending of different experience levels, the food was amazing, and the fellowship between the participants always justifies the hard work of putting them together. For me, this is one of the greatest pleasures in attending workshops: seeing passionate people come together, making new friends, and sharing their enthusiasm for working in clay. In some cases, it was challenging to get people to leave for the night so that the organizers could go home for a well deserved rest!

In preparation for the workshop, Bryan asked everyone to bring their most and least favourite mugs from their cupboard; the one you use as often as possible, and the one that hangs out at the back of the cupboard, but for some reason you just can't bring yourself to throw away. The weekend started off with a conversation about the cup form in general, what it means to potters (beyond simply a way to pay the mortgage), and how it is the most intimate object we make. A lively discussion of functional and aesthetic considerations developed naturally.



Bryan Hopkins, Photo: Chris Snedden

After this, workshop participants were sent off to make at least two cylinders, either thrown or hand-built. When this was completed, Bryan demonstrated how he often deconstructs thrown work and puts it back together. He then showed us how he mixes his slip for casting, and discussed various materials and recipes. He also talked about the process he uses to add texture to his slabs, the nuances in joining them together to avoid cracking, and the considerations he takes into account when finishing his forms. All of this is very useful information that the participants can incorporate into their own practice. It also makes you appreciate the porcelain worker's craft, and the material itself a good deal more.

Bryan makes some functional work that is intended to be used and enjoyed every day. His work might be glazed in some areas, and unglazed in others, contrasting the shiny with the matte. His impeccable craftsmanship and the translucency of the material elevates the simple daily rituals of eating and drinking to another level of satisfaction.

He also makes distinctly “dysfunctional” vessels, as he calls them. This body of work is intended to function in the aesthetic realm and

is based on forms echoing water towers and old barns that are in a state of disrepair. Bryan also draws inspiration for his sculptural vessels from the planes and curves of modern buildings you might see in any large city. One is in the last stages of its being, with holes in the roof, terrific textures, and may even be propped up against the wind to prevent it from falling over. The other is fresh and new, made of glass, steel, and concrete, intended to house a bustling population and glorify its own culture. In both cases, each architectural structure is functioning and serving a purpose to the user. Bryans' "dysfunctional" body of work often marries elements from each of these disparate structures and deliberately negates any functional application. These pieces excel in creating a beauty that is intriguing and stimulating to be around.

With an extensive history of both solo and group exhibitions, Bryan is a leader in the United States in the use of digital media to promote and sell his work. He has juried and curated numerous shows across the continent, and his work is collected and well sought after, but he still makes time for home, health, and family.

Bryan describes himself as “neurotic compulsive” when it comes to his work and be that as it may, he is anything but pretentious. With his self-effacing, yet assured, accessible demeanour, his generosity with his technical information, passion for his work, and philosophy of making, Bryan will have a lasting impact not only on the people who attended the workshop, but on the people around them as well. It was a great pleasure to spend the weekend with both Bryan and the rest of the participants at the beautiful Mississauga Potters' Guild studio.

Chris Snedden is a practicing ceramic artist. He teaches at Lambton College and is presently serving as President on the FUSION board of directors.

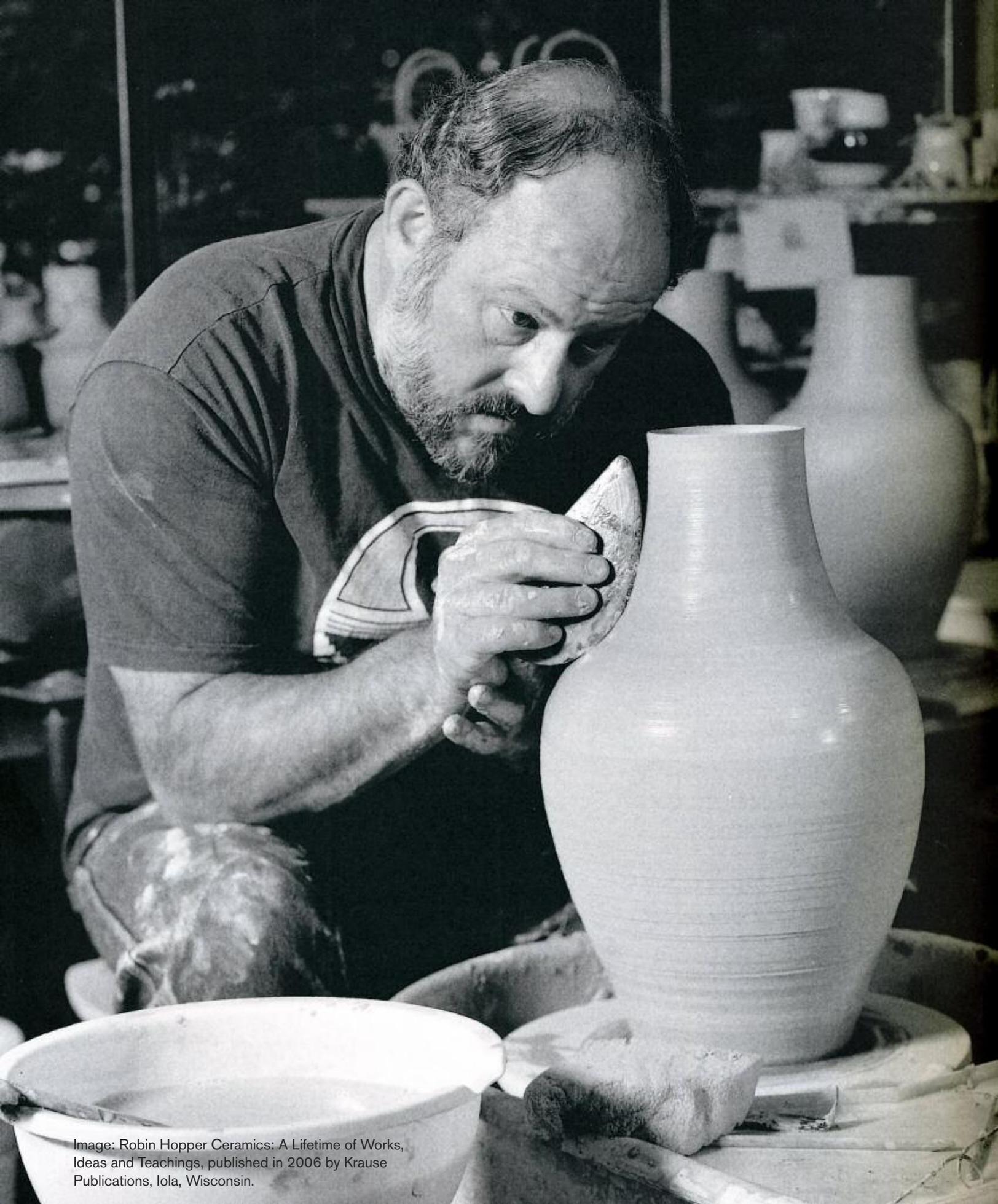


Image: Robin Hopper Ceramics: A Lifetime of Works, Ideas and Teachings, published in 2006 by Krause Publications, Iola, Wisconsin.

In Memorium

Metchosin potter lauded for living well-crafted

Metchosin potter Robin Hopper was nothing if not frank in writing his own obituary. Hopper, who died April 6 at the age of 77, described himself as “a man of many parts, mostly worn out, rusty and dysfunctional due to a lifetime of excesses!”

He said he enjoyed “a convoluted life’s journey” and left it with a giant smile. “Best wishes and thanks to all who made this life such a pleasure,” wrote Hopper, who earned many accolades for his work as a potter, including being named a member of the Order of Canada in December. The honour came for contributions to his field through the introduction of a number of innovative techniques.

Hopper wrote that he began working with clay at the age of three, and from there enjoyed a “lengthy, peripatetic career as a mud-pusher.”

He tried many other pursuits along the way, he said, including stints as a professional actor, jazz musician, geologist and alchemist. He also became known for the one-hectare garden he created in his yard, which inspired the ebook *A Potter’s Garden – An Artist’s Approach to Creative Garden-Making*.

Hopper had been living with inoperable liver cancer for about two years and passed away in hospice, said his wife, Judi Dyelle, also a noted potter. She said he was able to enjoy time with family just before he died.

“He’d been out with his daughter having lunch the day before and with his son the day before that.” He leaves three children, two stepchildren, 10 grandchildren and many other relatives.

Hopper was born in England in 1939 and was a young boy during the Battle of Britain – he remembered hot shrapnel and blue clay as playthings in the absence of toys. He made his way to Toronto in 1968 and then to Victoria in 1977.

Dyelle, who ran 'Chosin Pottery on Metchosin Road with Hopper, said he not only created sought-after pieces of art but travelled frequently around North America giving workshops. He and Dyelle also started the Metchosin International Summer School of the Arts at Pearson College.

After his cancer diagnosis, he began working on what he called his “Swansong” video, Dyelle said. “He felt that there were still some things he hadn’t

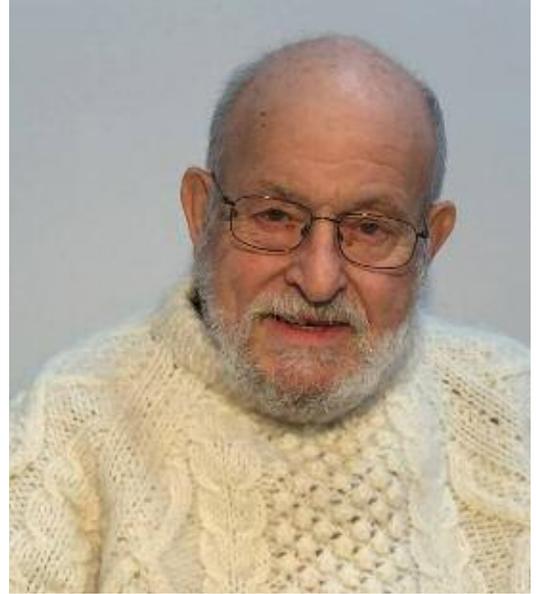


Image by Judi Dyelle

really had a chance to put out there, so part of the Swansong is things that he’s done in the past,” she said. “It’s just a culmination of him, I guess.” Dyelle said she was happy to see Facebook messages for Hopper from people who had never met him but were thankful for his books or DVDs. A Facebook post from his family said Hopper’s parents encouraged him “to leave the world a better place than he found it.”

“We think it is fair to say that he has definitely accomplished that beyond expectations,” the family said. “He lived a rich life and made a significant impact on many people. He brought beauty to the world with his pots and his garden.”

His work earned him a place in the University of Victoria’s special collections and archives. “He was an artist, he was an educator, he was a writer – he certainly made very significant international contributions to the world of ceramics and ceramics education,” said Lara Wilson, UVic director of special collections and archivist, noting the archives contains Hopper’s correspondence, manuscripts to his textbooks, information about his awards and his work as a ceramics historian. Hopper had a well-deserved reputation in his field, Wilson said. “His profile internationally was, I think, pretty much unparalleled in terms of the development of ceramics and design and educating fellow ceramicists about the art.”

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Times Colonist



**FUSION
MAGAZINE
SPOTLIGHT**
FEATURED EMERGING
ARTIST

LAYNE VERBEEK

Layne works to predictably harness the transformational qualities of glass to create sculpture that evokes unpredictable moments of surprise in the viewer.

He focuses on the positives and voids of shape, the full range of textures that can be wrought and never shies from colour. Kiln-casting also allows him to render glass in unexpected ways; such as his unique technique of making glass that looks like stone or granite.

Verbeek has had a life-long passion for creating. Before glass, he worked in clay, painting, photography, murals and mixed media sculpture.

Verbeek finally found “his medium” in glass and began kiln casting in 2014 after 25 years as a senior health care public relations and marketing expert.

“I am also transfixed by the contradictory properties of glass (opaque and transparent, rigid and brittle), and I am drawn to the fact that, unlike most other media, kiln-cast glass is largely formed at very high temperatures with gravity and out of reach for ‘real time’ manipulation.”

Layne now works full-time making and selling his glass sculptures.



FUSION MAGAZINE SPOTLIGHT

FEATURED
EMERGING ARTIST

GRACIA ISABEL GÓMEZ CANTOYA

I came from Mexico City to study in Canada. I have been always surrounded by an ancient ceramic tradition.

Currently, I am interested in the mythologies and the hybrid traditions of my country. I want to examine multicultural narratives and universal symbolism to better understand the links between different human civilizations.

My recent work attempts to understand the way colonialism transformed one of the most important cultures of its time in the world five hundred years ago, and how the resulting nation is still influenced and enriched by other traditions. I am exploring the myths and beliefs that made possible the integration of external ideas and technology.

Furthermore, I am excited about the results and transcendence of these cultural exchanges between contemporary countries and how to communicate them.

The way I understand the creative process encourages me to explore multiple techniques and concepts so that I may contribute within the artistic field as a ceramicist.

CARVED IN STONE



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EVENTS

June 9 – 11, 2017

FUSION Conference

Fanshawe College

London, ON

FUSION is proud to be featuring Paula Murray, Sarah Pike and Mariko Patterson at our conference this year. Please join us for an inspirational weekend of hands-on workshops and presentations delivered by these great Canadian ceramic artists. For more information and to register:

clayandglass.on.ca

June 9 – 11, 2017

Fireworks 2017 Exhibition

Museum London

London, ON

Opening reception June 9, 7-9pm

The tradition of the Fireworks exhibition started over 35 years ago. This biennial juried exhibition of ceramics and glass will travel for two years to galleries throughout Ontario. The opening will take place at the Museum London in London Ontario on June 9, 2017 to coincide with the annual FUSION Conference. For more information:

clayandglass.on.ca

April 9 – August 24

Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery

25 Caroline St N

Waterloo, ON

Cultural Topographies

The Complexities of History and Identity in Canada

This exhibition features concept-driven artworks in ceramic and glass that explore identity, culture and history in Canada. Exhibiting artists include: Ann Beam, Adrian Blackwell, Laurent Craste, Chris Curreri, Léopold L. Foulem, Mathieu Grodet, David R. Harper, Sarah Maloney, Kelly Mark, Nadia Myre, Tasman Richardson and Tim Whiten.

theclayandglass.ca

May 5 – 28, 2017

Carnegie Gallery – Pas De Deux

10 King St W

Dundas, ON

An exhibition of high fired porcelain by Maureen Marcotte and David McKenzie

carnegiegallery.org

February 16 – May 21, 2017

Janet Macpherson: A Canadian Bestiary

Gardiner Museum

111 Queen's Park

Toronto, ON

gardinermuseum.on.ca

March 1 – May 31, 2017

Chiho Tokita: ikebana abstracting: forty

Gardiner Museum Shop

111 Queen's Park

Toronto, ON

Merging the container and the contained, where the flower and the vase are fused together as a single entity, ikebana abstracting re-interprets the Japanese art of flower arrangement as a sculptural collage. These ikebana forms are amassed together to create a garden of gestures, playing with line, texture and material expressions.

gardinermuseum.on.ca/store/

David Kaye Gallery

1092 Queen St W

Toronto, ON

davidkayegallery.com

June 1 – 25

Carol Rossman

November 2 – 26

Steve Heinemann

November 30 – December 23

Zane Wilcox

CARVED IN STONE

March 23 – June 3, 2017

Craft Ontario '17
Craft Ontario Gallery
1106 Queen St W
Toronto, ON
craftontario.com

CALL FOR ENTRY

Canadian Craft Biennial Emerging Exhibition: Nothing is Newer than Tradition
Deadline for Entry: Friday, June 9, 2017, 11:59 PM EST
The Art Gallery of Burlington, in collaboration with Craft Ontario, is pleased to announce the inaugural Canadian Craft Biennial, August 19 to October 29, 2017. As part of Biennial programming, Nothing is Newer than Tradition will present the work of emerging Ontario makers that reflect a dedicated engagement with specialized skills and materials. The exhibition will explore how craft materials, tools and processes are creatively reiterated through the hands of a new generation of makers.

Craft Ontario welcomes emerging craftspeople throughout Ontario to submit their work to Nothing is Newer than Tradition. For more details: www.craftontario.com

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2017

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September 7 - October 1

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