



Memory Lane

Ceramics by
Pippa Samsworth

2021



Figure 3

Figure 2



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I was brought up on stories. I've grown tall and strong holding the hands of characters from beloved fables of picturesque lands. With books given to me by loved ones on birthdays from grandparents and friends, to books bought in second-hand shops and stories told at bedtime. Stories have helped me grow, moulding me as I age, encouraging me to look closer, question, and document the world around me.



Figure 4



Figure 5

As a kid, I would recreate characters I saw on the pages before me with crayons or magic markers, desperately trying to bring them to life in my own way. My artistic journey started with drawing, which led to painting, which led to a strong urge to make things. It wasn't long after I started working with clay that I started drawing on pots. And not long after I started drawing on pots, I started to explore my own stories and history.





Figure 6 7

My work embodies my intrinsic thoughts, my feelings and memories; my yearnings, losses, faces, and places of those I love and miss - all the things that help me understand my very own story. My ceramics practice has morphed, changed, and grown with me, just as the stories from my childhood have.



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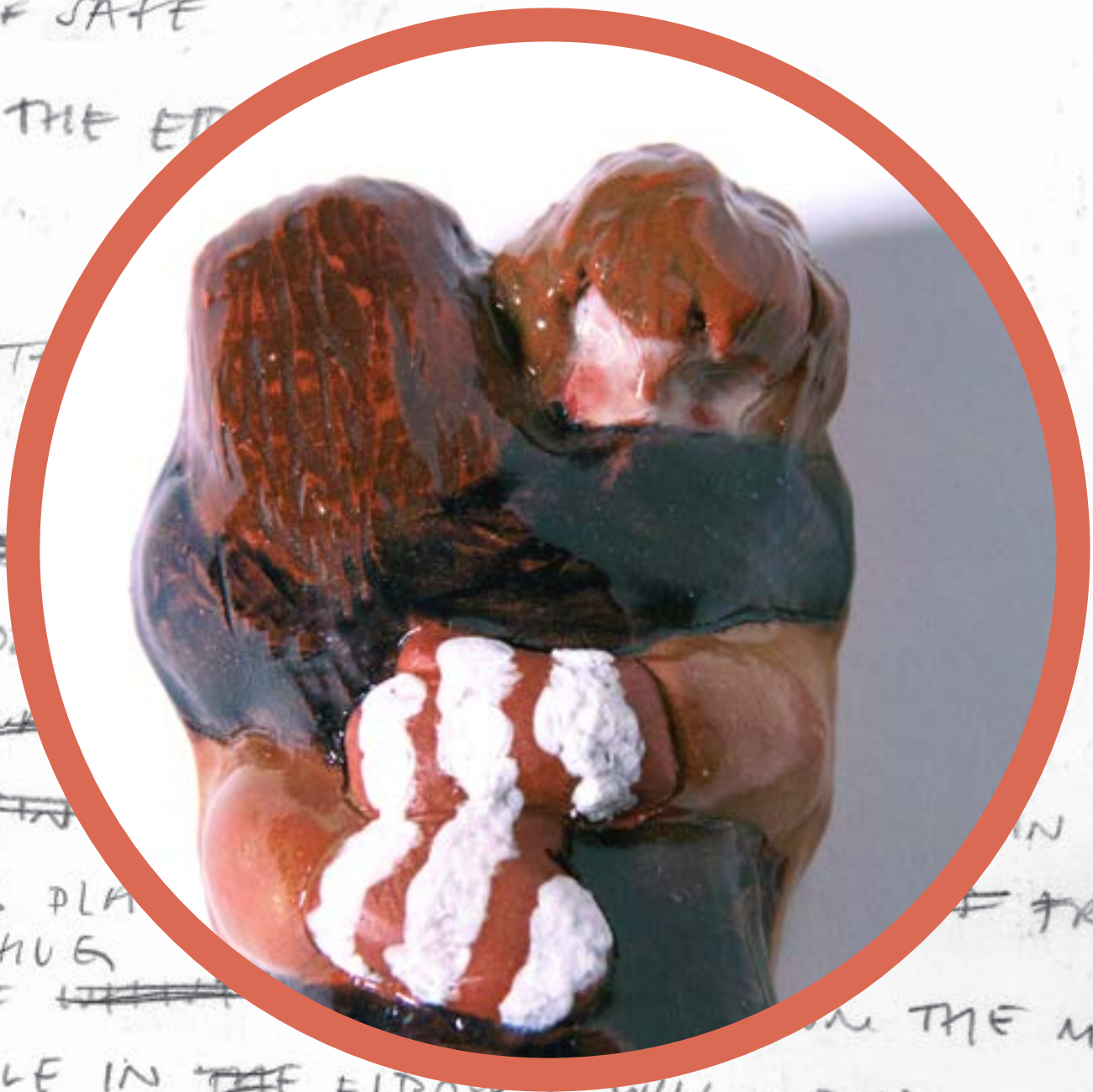


Figure 8

Figure 9





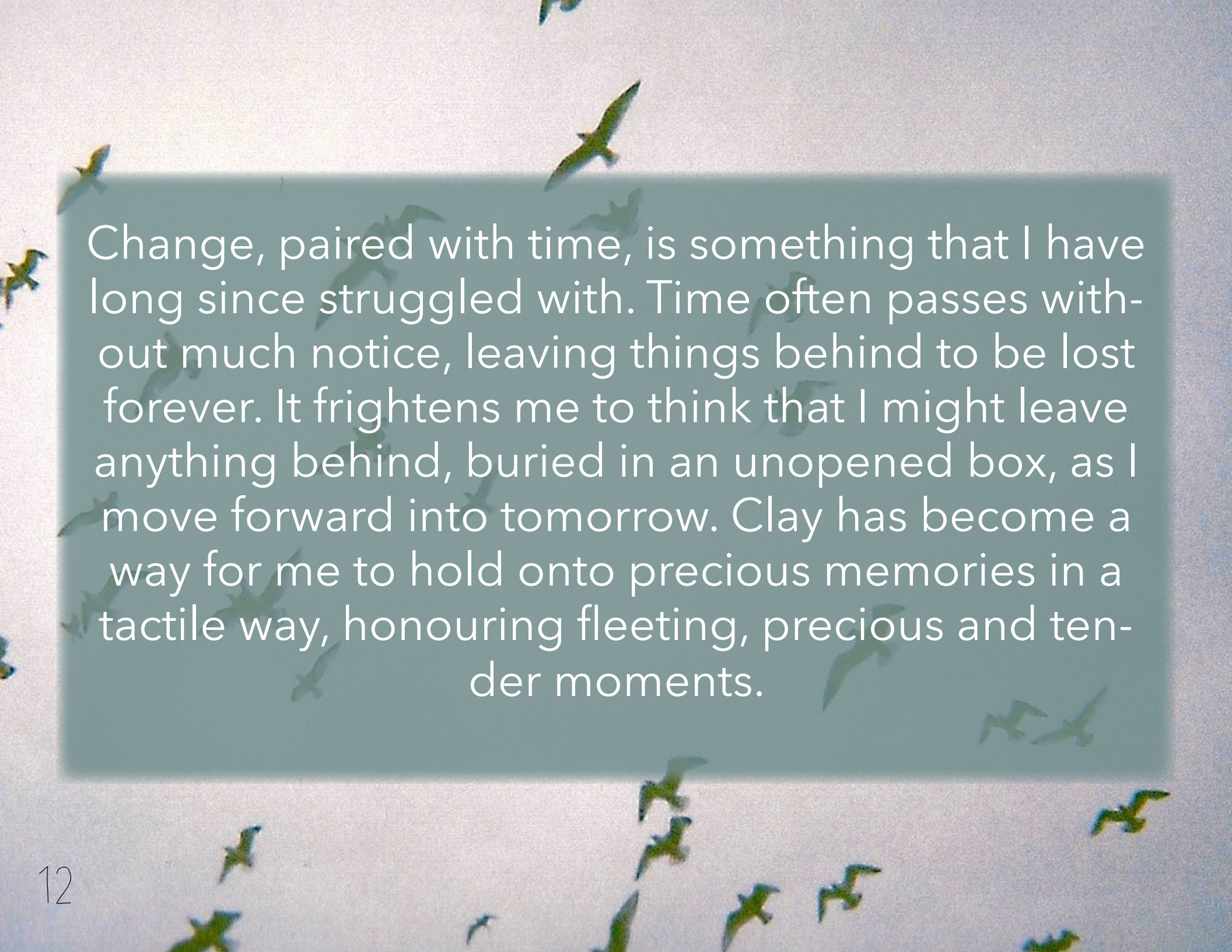
Figure 11



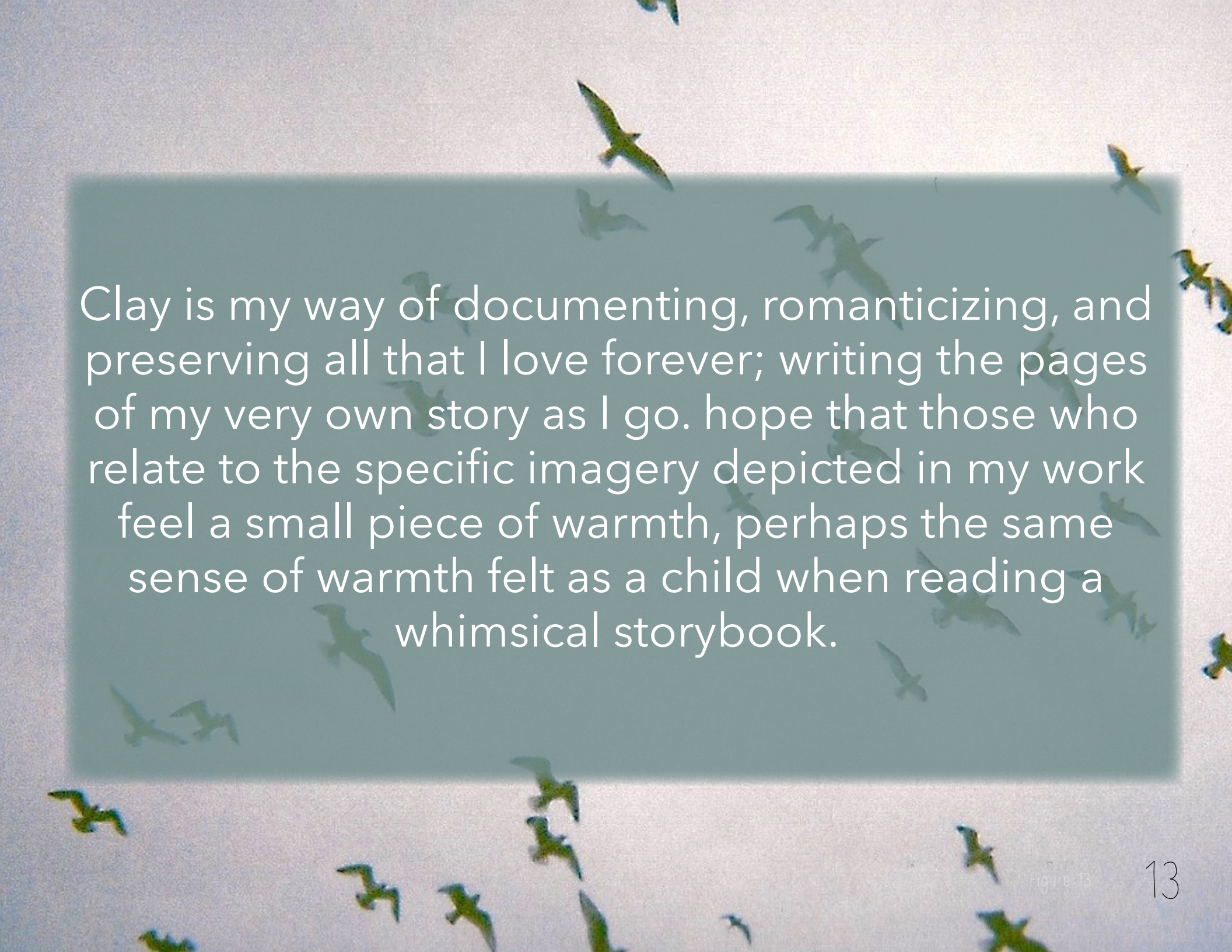
Figure 12

How Would You Like To Be Me

Teatime is very important in my house. There is always hot water on the boil, tea in the pot, and biscuits in the tin. I made this teapot for my Mum as a way for her to connect to and honour the many memories of tea time spent with her mum, my Nana. A sweet drawing of Nana's bird-filled garden, and a poem she used to recite, with a fat little robin sitting on top. This pot brings my mum great joy and reminds all who use it of my dear Nana, whom we miss dearly.



Change, paired with time, is something that I have long since struggled with. Time often passes without much notice, leaving things behind to be lost forever. It frightens me to think that I might leave anything behind, buried in an unopened box, as I move forward into tomorrow. Clay has become a way for me to hold onto precious memories in a tactile way, honouring fleeting, precious and tender moments.



Clay is my way of documenting, romanticizing, and preserving all that I love forever; writing the pages of my very own story as I go. hope that those who relate to the specific imagery depicted in my work feel a small piece of warmth, perhaps the same sense of warmth felt as a child when reading a whimsical storybook.



Figure 14



wonder what
they're looking
at



Barefoot
across the
common



→ mind the poo!

Place

Place plays a massive role in my nostalgia. I have been blessed to have grown up visiting my grandparents every summer on the coast of England and Ireland. I cherish the memories from my childhood summers that were spent with cousins splashing in salty waves, exploring my grandfather's garden, and running barefoot on dewy grass and pebble beaches.





Figure 17

Using imagery from summers past, familiar wallpaper patterns, and poems that remind me of people I love as points of inspiration, I create a space for my nostalgia to manifest into something greater than myself. Clay allows me to reignite moments that have passed, bringing back places I am afraid to forget, giving them a tactile permanence. Memories exist only in the mind of the beholder; they are often distorted, and lose their strength with the passing of time, a part of me refuses to accept this.

A photograph of a kitchen window with a sink and various items on the counter. A large green circle is overlaid on the window, containing text. The window looks out onto a lush green landscape with trees and a building. The counter has a sink, a faucet, a soap dispenser, a sponge, and several other items. The text inside the circle reads: "As I've grown up I've said goodbye to both people and places I call home. Drawing my grandparent's house on a plate, or exploring pebbled shores through sculpture has become a way for me to grieve, and to make sense of what it is to grieve in the eyes of time's bitter sting."

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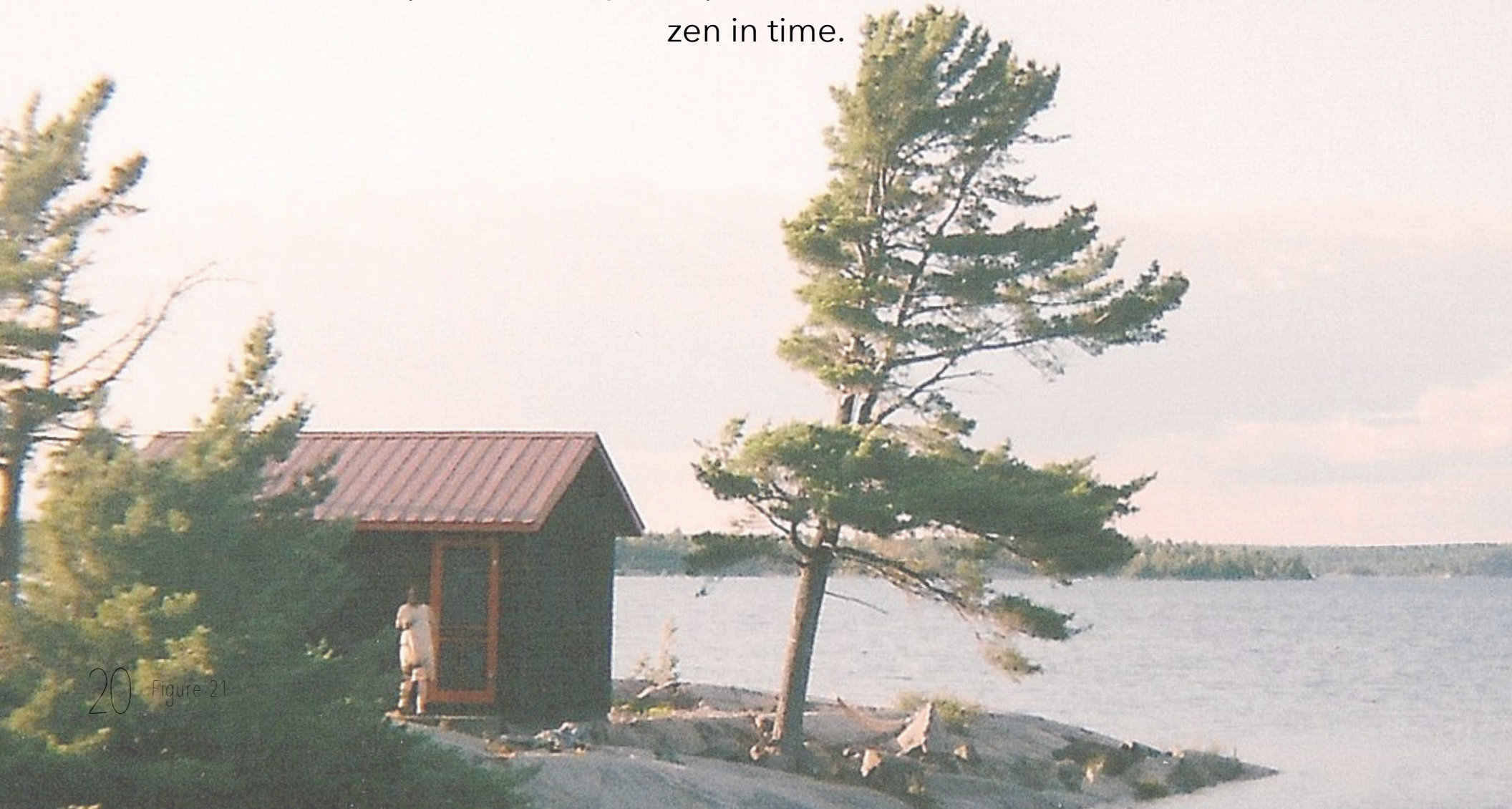
Bitworthy

My grandparent's seaside home in Herne Bay



Figure 20

Platters and plates have played a large role in my exploration of processes and content depicted. The traditional platter forms I create are reminiscent of Nana's hutch full of plates, and the silver platters on the mantle in Bitworthy. The plates that I grew up seeing have always held a comforting presence, they have always reliably been part of the furniture. Landscapes layered with 3D elements and figures create a curious and slightly distorted sense of depth that brings the piece a sense of life; as if it were a moment frozen in time.



Messing About

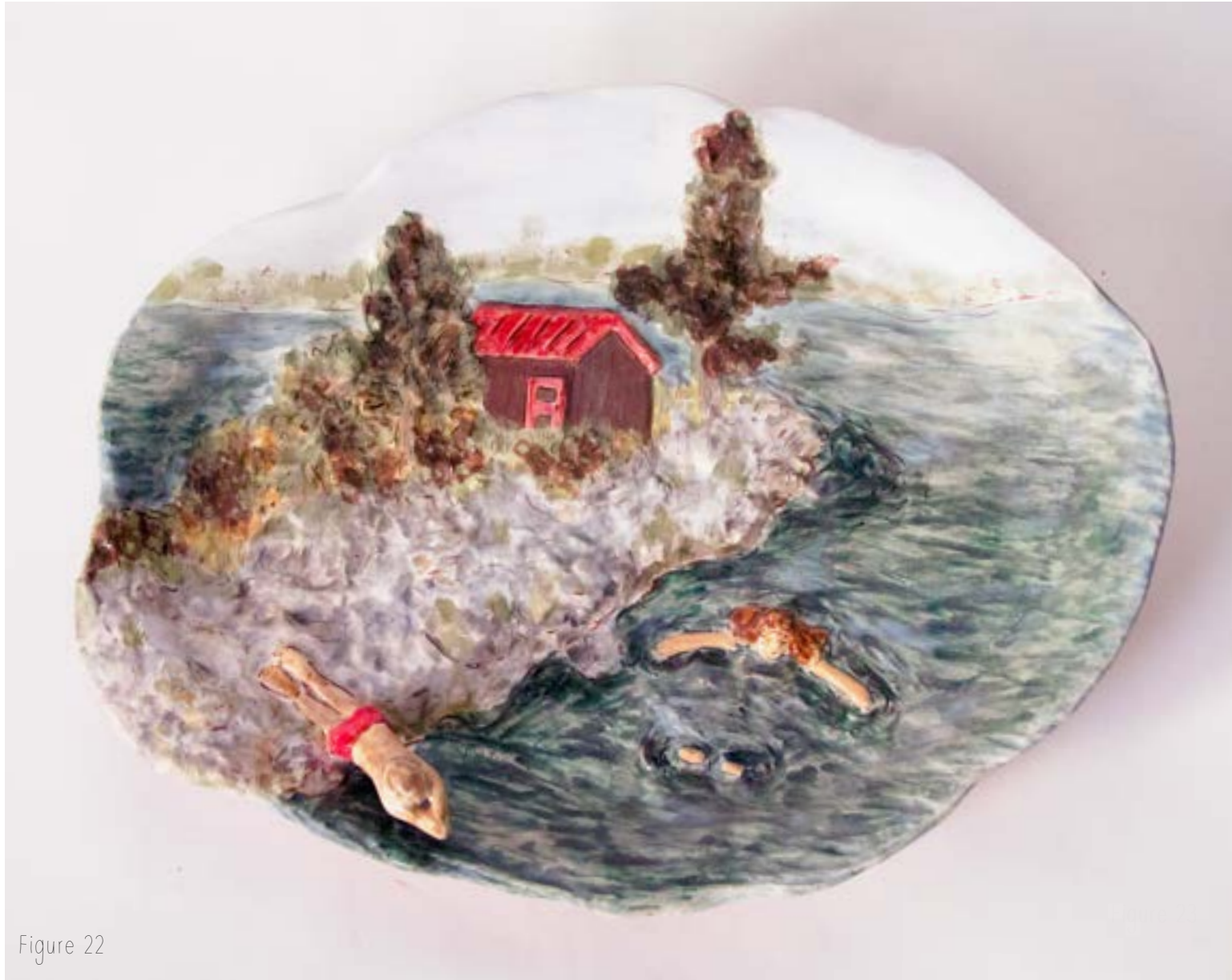


Figure 22



Figure 23



Figure 24

Figure 25



Figure 26



Figure 27

Process

Sgraffito is a technique that goes hand in hand with drawing. I use sgraffito to create sharp, deep red lines that contrast the softness of the top layer of white slip.



Figure 28

Figure 29



Figure 30

Using a mixture of linseed oil and mason stations in combination with CMC gum and water, I can directly photocopy images onto my pieces. These transfers are often foggy and fragmented, just like memories.



Seasons

Time passes, seasons change. The natural world breathes resiliently, always bringing a new dawn after a seemingly neverending darkness. Constant change within my own life overwhelms me, but change alongside the seasons ground me. Yellow leaves, ice in the harbour, budding flowers and fields of green have naturally weasled their way into my work. The seasons bring with them life, then an inevitable decay, along with new memories and experiences and the hope of tomorrow. Change is constant and scary, but the seasons remind me of the beauty change holds.



Figure 31



Figure 32

Precious moments of peace, quiet and safety within nature also play a large role my work. I spend a great deal of time enjoying the great outdoors with my dog, Paddington. We sit, we play, we admire the vast beauty that surrounds us. I so love the idea of being so small in a world of vast endlessness. Two figures, Paddy and I, speak to the beauty of companionship and togetherness in all shapes and forms.





Figure 34

Light

Light is an element that is so heavily connected with memory, moments, safety and warmth. The orange glow of my warm kitchen and the dancing shadows from trees outside, the soft glimmer from the salt lamp, the setting sun, the ripples of moonbeams on the lake - light is so intertwined in everything I see and feel, and everything I want to express through my work.



Figure 35



Lost in the Trees

This piece represents a moment spent in pure peace, quiet, wonder and light. The warm glow shines from within the ominous trees, bringing light to the darkness of the big wild wood. I sit and I read with Paddington, lost in the moment, completely content. "Lost in the trees" touches upon the childish wonder, contentment and sense of safety that nature has to offer.





Figure 37 35



Figure 38

I think I will always have one foot in the real world, and one in the clouds, encouraging me to look back. My work will grow with my thoughts and feelings, and go through waves alongside my emotions. I will continue to explore themes of family, place, loss, love and light as my relationship with these things will inevitably shift with time. I want to keep creating space for my emotions to dwell and ripen with age - allowing others a window to peer intrinsically within their own heart and mind, honouring emotions and memories that are so often hidden in a box under the bed.



Figure 39

Appendix

Figure 1 - "Oakville Harbour" close up
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Figure 40

