

Opposites Attract

Rachel Chronister and Jessica Sneddon

Abstract

Every artist has their own unique style, taste, and views on what they consider aesthetically pleasing. Although two artists may be using the same medium, they could have opposite outcomes. When sitting down at a wheel, every ceramicist goes through the same starting process. From there, the possibilities are endless. The pieces shown in this exhibit are an example of how two ceramic artists start with the same process, and end with two completely different products. Jess chose to focus on functional pieces with more traditional forms, making small cups and bowls with bright glaze combinations and different textures. Rachel chose to work with larger scale, untraditional forms to make nonfunctional pieces with monochromatic underglaze pencil drawings on the surface. With this, they demonstrate how opposite styles can come together and complement each other aesthetically.

The works each of us chose to present today are overall examples of opposites attracting. Our pieces are opposite from each other and contrast in the sense that our work is very different from one another. Beyond that, the works have contrasting elements within themselves. Whether it is contrasting colors or movement versus hard edges, each piece works with the theme of opposites attract.

Rachel Chronister:

The work that I chose to present plays with both untraditional forms and scale. Compared to other works that I have created in the past, these vases are on a larger scale. The forms themselves are untraditional in the sense that I chose to work with taller vases, with smaller necks. The use of sharp edges and clean lines enhances the uniqueness of each piece. I counteracted the hard edges with loose, freehanded underglaze pencil sketches. Underglaze pencils work almost exactly like regular graphite pencils, but with underglaze in

them instead. Underglazes are highly pigmented colored slips: raw pigment, clay, and water. Usually, underglazes are applied to wet or leather hard clay before it gets bisque fired. This material comes in many different forms (liquid, pencil, pen, etc.) and can be used in many different ways. When I use an underglaze pencil, I draw directly onto bisque ware (fired but unglazed), which is the stage in which the clay is sturdy enough for me to apply pressure to the piece without it breaking. With these, I am able to combine my love of drawing with my passion of ceramics. These sketches have movement in them that contrasts with the

angles in the form. Contrast is also present in terms of color. I chose a black underglaze pencil so that once it is fired, it will contrast with the white of the porcelain. Although these pieces are functional and can be used by the average person, I envision these pieces as decor items that would be displayed.



Jessica Sneddon:

The work I have decided to present as part of my exploration and experimentation with the effects and outcomes of marbling different colorants (stains, raw chemicals, etc.) into clay. I have used a variety of methods for coloring the clay using a combination of stains and raw chemical colorants such as oxides and carbonates. The way that I achieve the marbling aspect is by coloring one body of clay and wedging, or softly pushing, the clay together. I do this by taking the slip of my clay, which is clay with a higher percentage of water, and mixing in the colorant. I mix in the colorant while the clay is in this state because the colorant can be evenly distributed to create a smoother color. I then allow the clay to dry out enough to where it has a moisture level

appropriate to throw with on the wheel. I take small amounts of the colored clay and wedge it gently together into the regularly colored clay and proceed to throw with it on the ceramic wheel as I normally would. I finish the pieces by trimming these bowls and cups and putting on final touches off the ceramic wheel before firing to completion with a simple clear glaze.

My work demonstrates how opposites attract through the marbling itself. The marbling is a constant battle between the natural color of the clay and the artificial colors I add into it. The marbling swirls around the pieces as if the colors are chasing one another in a playful game of tag.



Recommended Citation

Chronister, R., Sneddon, J. (2019). Opposites attract. *Made in Millersville Journal*, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.mimjournal.com>.