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Ceramics P.5

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Discovery

Discovery, by definition, is the action of finding something unexpectedly or in the course of a search. Throughout my first semester as an advanced student I have depended and thrived on the discovery of new techniques, ideas, and knowledge when it comes to my ability to make ceramics art. Through my art I have been able to discover my strengths and weaknesses as a blooming ceramicist, not only in my abilities to form and mold clay into different shapes I’ve never worked with before, but also through the use of specific techniques that I have grown particular to (i.e. glazes, sizes, forms, shapes, textures, motifs, etc). The acquiring of these new techniques, themes, and confidences in my abilities to create my own inspired art has allowed me to discover art in a different point of view, and will subsequently allow me to grow and expand my knowledge as it is acquainted with art.

The projects that I am using to demonstrate the use of my theme, discovery, in my year of ceramics include an older cylinder, my set of three vases, two smaller similarly glazed vases, and a planter that is hand altered. The first project is a small cylinder that I made in the beginning of the semester. It has some carved images, contrasting glazes, and a rudimentary shape. My next pieces include my set of three vases, all of which are glazed in identical matte turquoise glaze, but have slightly different shapes, sizes, and thicknesses. Next I have two petite vases, both of which are glazed in cobalt blue and off white, however, the placement of the glazes and the texture of the vases’ outer surfaces emphasize the different shapes. Lastly I have a wheel thrown planter that has a hand made clay nest with 3 eggs slipped and scored on its lip. It has been colored with coordinating glazes that contrast with one anther, thus emphasizing the stained drawings on the surfaces.

The beginning cylinder project was a wheel thrown project that was accidentally deformed during footing. However, I did not let the accident stop me, and I was able to then carve images of leaves and an undulating line along the bottom of the cylinder, and I added a carved, indented foot ring, all of which helped to disguise the marks from the footing accident. It was lastly glazed with contrasting colors that emphasize the images carved into it. The three wheel thrown vases, which are my set of three, each have different thicknesses and slightly varying forms, one having thicker walls and a flatter lip, and another being thinner, with a flared lip. All three are glazed in turquoise matte glaze, which allows the differences in their forms to stand out. The two vases were wheel thrown, pulled, and choked to form the shapes, and one of the vases is hand altered with carved lines that wave slightly, all moving upwards, like grass reeds, which is a reoccurring motif in this particular project. Both vases were glazed in cobalt blue and off white, but one was dipped and one was hand painted. Lastly, my planter project was thrown on the wheel and then altered by slipping and scoring a hand made clay nest with 3 small eggs inside it onto the lip of the planter. It was hand brushed with off white glaze, and the nest in metallic brown. Then it was painted with images of leaves and patches of grass on the outside surface of the planter with a green stain, and on the inside of the bottom of the bowl is a stained cherry apple red heart.

In all four examples of the many projects that I made, every one demonstrates individual instances where I took the liberty to try new techniques or ideas that enables me to learn my strengths or weaknesses in specific sections of my art. For example, in my set of three I was able to discover my preferences as to the thickness of the walls of my projects. While making my two small vases I played around with different glazing techniques, and discovered my abilities to emphasize shape of projects with the use of glazes and the textures you create with them. The contrast between my first cylinder of the year to my final planter project demonstrates how much I have discovered about my likes and dislikes, as well as strengths and weaknesses, when it comes to my art.

Last year, as a beginning ceramics student, I was just starting to learn the motions and physical rules of working with clay in making ceramic projects, but this year, as an advanced student, I was able to fully discover what my strengths, weaknesses, likes, and dislikes are when it comes to creating ceramic projects. I was able to discover a variety of different forms and shapes of wheel thrown projects, as well as being able to try new techniques when it came to hand and wheel projects, glazing, etc. All in all this semester I have been able to expand my knowledge and skills as a ceramicist through my discovery of my skills in pottery.