

## Artist statement

My current work finds inspiration from life forms of the ocean, structure and movement of the human body, and the rich and diverse history of functional ceramics. I take these subjects as starting points to later work out ideas loosely and intuitively on paper. These sketches become rough diagrams of my three dimensional work.

Informed by unique oceanic life I create dynamic forms that allude to live beings. I borrow the vivid and varied color palette and patterns from oceanic life to inform my work. Rare and specialized forms that appear alien to us can be found in the aquatic environments. These alien forms often arouse awe, wonder, and specifically curiosity. Employing these alien qualities I can give my work a sense of this arousal.

The sense of movement and dynamics in my work stems from the study of human structure and locomotion. Skin stretched over outstretched limbs is referenced in form; illustrated by moments of fullness that oppose the protrusions of bone. Masculinity and femininity are clouded as these moments of harshness meet gentleness and calm.

The substantial foundation of functional pottery comes from the work of historical Chinese potters, Tang Dynasty ceramics, dramatic proportions of Ancient Greece and the highly varied use of clay found in ritual African ceramics. This strong history informs my work with poise and elegance as well as curiosity of use. I reference these diverse histories loosely utilizing parts that excite me.

Reverence for ancient forms and their construction is of significant focus. This rich history's use of molds, darting and other manipulations of clay has lead me to find my own specific processes. I begin with the wheel to create pots that are relatively formless. By "darting" the clay, cutting and removing clay, I create forms that undulate and move through space. Altering ceramic traditional forms I can elicit the feeling of living beings through gesture, poise, and movement. Often my work appears to long for an animated existence; in order to interact more intimately with the viewer. I utilize glaze to bring attention to this movement, at other times to subdue it. My work gives the viewer desire to touch and feel, as well as delight their visual senses.

Intimate interactions with the viewer are precisely why I create functional vessels of clay. The support of a lover's hand on your skin or even a comforting pressure of their lips can be found in my work. Functional vessels in clay demand your care and attention. In return they offer themselves, all of their faults, truths, and sensibilities. Through my work I reach into the space of individuals and can interact intimately with the user.

Timothy Bergelin