

I live in a working class neighborhood in the center of a small, blue collar, underdog town that was built on tree pulp, paper and textile mills. My studio is at my house, located in a small one car garage snuggled up to my neighbors back door. Although I do not live in the country surrounded by rolling hills or nestled in between a rocky inlet and a sheep farm, I think of my life as idyllic. My studio and life move fluidly back and forth: garden to studio, studio to neighbor, neighbor to rowdy neighbor, rowdy neighbors to cop cars, and a refrigerator on fire at the end of my street. Occasionally this can be distracting, but both in body and in mind I think this description serves as the perfect metaphor for my way of working.

I believe that I am a potter by chance, but a maker at my core. Through a series of circumstances I ended up in the ceramics studio, though I could have easily ended up a jeweler or furniture maker had a few minor things been different. I am intensely connected to function and the joy that making and using handmade objects brings to me and others. I am deeply effected by acts of what Ellen Dissanayke calls “making special”. I believe that through the ritual of “making special” one can connect with humankind and imbue the world with joy and beauty. It is from this perspective that I am trying to make meaningful, relevant, and contemporary pots while keeping in mind the world we live, in the year 2010.

My pots walk a thin line of being at times both sparse and embellished. They boast no fanciful feet, slip trailed embellishments or luscious glaze patterning. Structurally the bodies of my pots are relatively straightforward as is the applique which is carefully placed to activate the surface. Yet knobs, handles, bobbles, and decaled applique tend towards bold, unconventional and at times a bit peculiar ornamentation. Both my pots and my surface are rooted in the garden, my compost, mosaic, contemporary textile, design objects, ornamentation and hopefully the unpredictable. (Lately my daughter’s books, clothing and toys have provided added inspiration.) I am trying to find the perfect balance between too much and not enough, knowing that my inclination is to pile it on only to want to take it away. My work repeats my real life compulsion to binge and purge. My urge to collect, arrange, style, garnish, celebrate, and be over the top is cramped by an equally pervasive desire to boil things down, organize, codify, and to live simply and clutter free.

I am intrigued by the “flat” nature of my work. My pots are garnished with an applique sticker in the wet state. It is cut from a very plastic and thinly rolled slab of clay. I am fascinated by the flatness of the applique juxtaposed with the form. The irony that the applique is both three dimensional and two dimensional is appealing to me. I think about each layer in terms of a veneer: the slab of clay, the even coat of white slip, the skin of clear glaze, the applique, the line that breaks around each applique edge, and the two dimensional drawing placed like a sticker on each piece of applique.

In life I am most drawn to that which is decorative, celebratory and outrageous. I am touched by such joyful trimmings as architectural embellishments, yard art, ornamental cuisine and confections, as well as punk rockers and drag queens. Lately I have become interested in assertive acts of decorating: graffiti, children's stickers, tattoos and piercings. They seem unequivocal and self assured in there desire to adorn. The physical nature of these acts alone shows conviction. I like that confidence. I like to think that every time I decorate I am instigating a deliberate and significant act of “Making Special”. I decorate therefore I am.

