

Fall 2023

Everything Changes, Nothing Dies.

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OLIVIA STINSON'S CERAMICS MFA THESIS EXHIBITION:

Everything Changes, Nothing Dies.



President of Fort Hays State University

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Karrie Simpson-Voth, MFA

Graduate Committee

Linda Ganstrom, MFA
Professor of Ceramics

Amy Schmierbach, MFA
Professor of Drawing

Tobias Flores, MFA
Professor of Sculpture

Betsy Crawford, Ed.D NCSP
Associate Professor of Education



Graduate Catalog
Master of Fine Arts Degree
Fort Hays State University
Hays, Kansas
December 2023

Everything Changes, Nothing Dies.

Exhibited at the Moss-Thorns Gallery of Art
November 27, 2023 - December 15, 2023

The Graduate Catalog is a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Master of Fine Arts degree.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my professor and thesis advisor, Linda Ganstrom, for her guidance, support, patience and love throughout the last three years. Sharing my life with you has been so rewarding.

I would also like to thank my committee members, Amy Schmierbach, Toby Flores, and Dr. Betsy Crawford, for giving me suggestions that helped me become a better artist and maker.

My sincere appreciation goes to my family and friends for their unwavering support and encouragement throughout my journey of life and graduate school. Their love and care have been my constant source of strength, motivation and healing.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the audience. Thank you for sitting with my work and feeling my soul through the artwork.

Thank you all for your invaluable contributions, support, and love towards my life and my thesis exhibition.

ARTIST STATEMENT

My recent work directly responds to my current state of being. The past three years have been the peak of the exploration within myself, learning the capacity of my mind. I've spent my time in the heat of trauma, filled with anger and resentment. I've spent time in a steady state of confusion, wondering who exactly I am and who I want to be. I am in a constant state of change, thinking deeply about my actions and how I can improve on processing the correlating emotions. Creating a body of work during times when listening to conversations within the self can feel so vulnerable, but also alleviating. I have learned to share my world with the people who surround me in hopes that we can connect and feel less alone in our troubles.

Clay has been meditative through this stretch of time as it teaches through the process as well as the final product. Starting with semi-coarse clay, I can feel what its made up of and the integrity it will bring to my sculpture. The fast manipulation of the material allows me to flesh out thoughts and ideas with ease. When creating, I make work in "the heat of the moment", shaping thoughts that weigh heavy on my mind at that current moment. I enjoy leaving the maker's mark on the piece for aesthetics and for the humanity of straying away from perfection, especially in the task of healing. The pieces are surfaced with washes of underglazes and stains, layered on in a meditative fashion; taking the time to see where each color lands and how it emphasizes the tenderness and fragility of the human body. Firing to cone 6 (2232°F) burns the chemical colorants in the underglaze, creating a somber color palette. The end result shows a figure who embodies these thoughts, experiences and lessons learned; becoming a physical representation of change, adaptation, and difficult conversations.

ARTIST STATEMENT

When formulating ideas, I am inspired by artists such as Andrea Keys Connell, Nancy Kubale and painter Julie Speed, through their use of fluid methods and engaging compositions. I use the figure and supporting objects to tell a story deeper than the eye can see. I put great importance on creating ambiguous figures and compositions so that the viewer can connect with the artwork and draw out their own meaning and healing. *'Til Death Do Us Part* alludes to the experiences one may go through and how it alters their course of life. We become bonded to our trauma as it sets the tone for future interactions. As we get to know this damage, we learn to either become one with the hurt, or to heal and grow. We will always change, but the deep mental wound will never leave us.

As an artist, I will be on a continual quest to explore the connection between our lived experience and how it impacts our course of life for the future. How can we differ in our trauma yet support each other and empathize with one another. We lose touch of our innermost selves when we can not identify the grim in ourselves and others, and act on being progressive in making the steps towards a more understanding and connective life.

ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Olivia Stinson was born in Omaha, Nebraska in 1998. She was raised in a family where creativity was often practiced and shared with one another. Her interest in art started at a young age through drawing, nail art, and homemade music videos. This passion progressed its way through grade school, where she took every single art class available to her, and into college. Her junior year of undergraduate school is where she fell in love with storytelling through the figure and body casting. Stinson graduated from Doane University in Crete, Nebraska with a Bachelors of Arts in Fine Arts, with an emphasis in ceramics and professional practices in May of 2020. After graduating from Doane University, Stinson moved to Hays, Kansas to attend the Master of Fine Arts program in Ceramics at Fort Hays State University. From 2020 to 2023, she learned the ins and outs of the materials she works with, and a large amount about herself in her personal life and as an artist.

Focused on healing from her traumas, she uses her ceramics as a vessel to portray her lived experience and the lessons she has learned along the way. Life is complex and can make one feel alienated in both experience and emotions. Stinson aims to connect with the viewer on those intimate levels and encourage them to sit with their own trauma, and heal from it. Moving forward, Stinson hopes to become a leader in the arts, motivating the community around her to create and share their human experience. Being vulnerable is trauma's best medicine.





Old Keys Won't Open New Doors
2022
terra cotta, underglaze, low-fire stain
25" x 12" x 6"



Silent Teachings

2023

ceramics, underglaze, high-fire stain

20" x 13" x 9"



Wading In Waist-High Water (2)
2022
terra cotta, underglaze, low-fire stain
19" x 18" x 9"



Rewind

2023

cone 6 red clay, underglaze, high-fire stain

14" x 10" x 9"





Some Days Are Worse Than Others

2023

half and half clay, colored slip, underglaze, high-fire stain

6" x 4" x 2" each



Sister
2021
half and half clay, underglaze, high-fire stain
22" x 21" x 10"

“In boiling water, you can’t see your reflection. Similarly, you can’t perceive the truth when you’re angry. Clarity emerges as the water calms. So, finding peace within your chaos is the best way to control your anger.”

--Bhagavad Gita







I Might Be Drowning
2022
half and half clay, underglaze, high-fire stain
12" x 9" x 9"





Contemplation

2022

half and half clay, underglaze, high-fire stain, paint, fabric

2 - 15" x 5" x 3", 9" x 5" x 4"



When Will Be The Right Moment?

2022

half and half clay, underglaze, high-fire stain

41" x 13" x 8"



Wading In Waist-High Water (1)
2022
terra cotta, underglaze, low-fire stain
25" x 24" x 11"



“When we avoid difficult
conversations, we trade short-term
discomfort for long-term
dysfunction.”

--Peter Bromberg



Stuck In Flight
2022
half and half clay, underglaze, high-fire stain
14" x 13" x 10"



Sitting With Thoughts
2023
half and half clay, underglaze, high-fire stain
10" x 4" x 5"



It Wasn't An Invitation

2022

half and half clay, underglaze, high-fire stain

24" x 16" x 9"





The Boat I Row

2022

terra cotta, underglaze, low-fire stain

11" x 17" x 8"



'Til Death Do Us Part
2023
cone 6 red clay, underglaze, high-fire stain
17" x 8" 13"

“You’re never too late, not even if you think you are and you don’t think you can believe otherwise. It’s not too late because at any moment you can still change that thought and you can change your actions.

*As long as you are alive,
things can change and there is time.”*

--Samantha Camargo



CATALOG LIST

By A Thread

2021

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stains, wire
24" x 10" x 5"

Finding Abundance

2022

half and half clay, paint, metal
44" x 12" x 15"

My Tears Are Becoming A Sea

2022

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
14" x 11" x 8"

Contemplation

2022

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stains, paint, fabric
2 - 15" x 5" x 3", 9" x 5" x 4"

Emergence

2022

paper porcelain, slip dip, high-
fire glaze
13" x 9" x 1"

Old Keys Won't Open New Doors

2022

terra cotta, underglaze, low-fire
stain
25" x 12" x 6"

Cry #1

2023

paper porcelain
2" x 4" x 4"

Heavy Baggage

2023

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
20" x 7" x 9"

Rewind

2023

red 6 clay, underglaze, high-fire
stain
14" x 10" x 9"

Cry #247

2023

paper porcelain
5" x 13" x 11"

I Might Be Drowning

2022

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
12" x 9" x 9"

Robbed

2023

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
5" x 3" x 3"

Don't Look, Don't Touch

2021

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stains
10" x 5" x 4"

It Wasn't An Invitation

2021

terra cotta clay, slip,
underglaze, high-fire stain
24" x 16" x 9"

Silent Teachings

2023

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
20" X 13" X 9"

CATALOG LIST

Sister

2021

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
22" x 21" x 10"

The Boat I Row

2022

terra cotta, underglaze, low-
fire stain
11" x 17" x 8"

What's Fair For Me?

2023

half and half clay,
underglaze, high-fire stain
5.5" x 3.5" x 7"

Sitting With Thoughts

2023

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
10" x 4" x 5"

'Til Death Do Us Part

2023

red 6 clay, underglaze, high-
fire stain
17" x 8" x 13"

*When Will Be The Right
Moment?*

2022

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
41" x 12.5" x 7.5"

Snail's Pace

2023

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
5" x 10" x 4"

Wading In Waist-High Water (1)

2022

terra cotta, underglaze,
low-fire stain
25" x 24" x 11"

Woman With Pheasants

2022

half and half clay, colored slip,
underglaze, high-fire stain
25" x 19" x 6"

*Some Days Are Worse Than
Others*

2023

half and half clay, colored slip,
underglaze, high-fire stain
6" x 4" x 2"

Wading In Waist-High Water (2)

2022

terra cotta, underglaze,
low-fire stain
19" x 18" x 9"

Stuck In Flight

2022

half and half clay, underglaze,
high-fire stain
14" x 13" x 10"

Wading In Waist-High Water (3)

2022

terra cotta, underglaze,
low-fire stain
17" x 19" x 9"

RESUME

EDUCATION

- 2023 Fort Hays State University, Master of Fine Arts, Ceramics (anticipated Dec. 2023)
- 2020 Doane University, Bachelor of Arts in Fine Art, emphasis in ceramics and professional practices

AWARDS

- 2023 **Outstanding Student Leader of the Year**, Student Engagement Awards, Fort Hays State University (FHSU), Hays, KS
- Diversity Program of the Year:** Figurative Symposium with Joey Quiñones and Jonathan Caballero, Student Engagement Awards, FHSU, Hays, KS

Earl O & Winona M Field Art School Scholarship, FHSU, Hays, KS

“Expanding Environment”, Graduate Scholarly Experience (GSE) Grant, FHSU, Hays, KS

1st Place Graduate Art, SACAD, FHSU, Hays, KS

2nd Place Graduate Art, SACAD, FHSU, Hays, KS

3rd Place Graduate Art, SACAD, FHSU, Hays, KS

Earl O & Winona M Field Art School Scholarship, FHSU, Hays, KS

- 2022 “Building Tranquility and Relief Through Ceramics”, GSE Grant, FHSU, Hays, KS
- Earl O & Winona M Field Art School Scholarship, FHSU, Hays, KS

- 2021 “Storytelling Through Surface Application”, GSE Grant, FHSU, Hays, KS

Best in Show, Sunflower Biennial, Salina Art Center, Salina, KS

- 2020 “Figurative Documentation”, GSE Grant, FHSU, Hays, KS
- Earl O & Winona M Field Art School Scholarship, FHSU, Hays, KS

- 2017 **Best 3D in Show**, Student Juried Show, Rall Gallery, Crete, NE

SOLO EXHIBITION

- 2023 *Everything Changes, Nothing Dies.*, MFA Thesis Exhibition, Moss-Thorns Gallery, Hays, KS
- 2020 *The Emotional Response*, BFA Exhibition, Virtual, Crete, NE

GROUP EXHIBITION

- 2023 *Graduate Student Exhibition*, Moss-Thorns Gallery, Hays, KS
- 18th Annual John Heinrichs Scholarly and Creative Activities Day Exhibition*, Hays, KS
- 2022 *Iridescence*, Schmidt Foundation Center for Art and Design, Hays, KS
- Jana’s Campaign: Sexual and Domestic Violence Awareness*, Styles Dance Studios, Hays, KS
- 17th Annual John Heinrichs Scholarly and Creative Activities Day Exhibition*, Hays, KS
- Fortitude and Persistence*, Hays Arts Council, Hays, KS
- Emotions - 2021*, virtual exhibition, Gallerium Art harmonies + tensions, Hays Public Library, Hays, KS
- 2021 *38th Annual Five State Photography Exhibition*, Hays Arts Council, Hays, KS
- Fortitude and Persistence*, Lincoln Art Council, Lincoln, KS
- FHSU Graduate Exhibition*, Moss-Thorns Gallery, Hays, KS
- Fortitude and Persistence*, Prairie Museum of Art and History, Colby, KS
- MONA Biennial Exhibition*, Museum of Nebraska Art, Kearney, NE
- Inside The Box*, 2021 Installation Workshop Exhibition, Moss-Thorns Gallery, Hays, KS
- Summer Art Walk’s Graduate Exhibition*, Hays Arts Annex, Hays, KS
- 2021 Nebraska Artist Biennial*, Gallery 1516, Omaha, NE
- 16th Annual John Heinrichs Scholarly and Creative Activities Day Exhibition*, Virtual, Hays, KS
- FHSU Art and Design: Fortitude and Persistence*, Hays Arts Council, Hays, KS
- Sunflower Biennial*, Salina Art Center, Salina, KS
- 2020 *Connect Exhibition*, Virtual, Hays, KS
- Orton Cone Box Show*, Virtual, NCECA
- Senior Student Exhibition*, Rall Gallery, Crete, NE
- 2019 *Student Juried Show*, Rall Gallery, Crete, NE
- 2017 *Student Juried Show*, Rall Gallery, Crete, NE

RESUME

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

- 2023 **Ceramic World Destinations Researcher**, researcher under Judith S. Schwartz, MoCA-NY, New York
- 2022 **Ceramic World Destinations Researcher**, researcher under Judith S. Schwartz, MoCA-NY, New York
President of Ceramica Clay Club 2022-2023, Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS
Graduate Teaching Assistant (2022-2023 term), FHSU, Hays, KS
- 2021 **President of Ceramic Clay Club** 2021-2022, FHSU, Hays, KS
Graduate Teaching Assistant (2021-2022 term), FHSU, Hays, KS
- 2020 Lead Virtual Event Designer, FHSU Alumni Association, Hays, KS
Executive Board Member for Gamma Phi Iota, Doane University, Crete NE
- 2019 Executive Board Member for Gamma Phi Iota, Doane University, Crete NE

ART-RELATED EXPERIENCE

- 2022 Gallery Installation Assistant to Kathy Robb, Human Nature, Shafer Art Gallery, Barton Community College, Great Bend, KS
- 2021 Assistant Graphic Designer, FHSU Alumni Association, Hays, KS
- 2020 **Winter Residency** under Professor Linda Ganstrom, Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS
Iron Pouring Assistant, Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS
Teaching Assistant to Eric Stearns, 3D Design, Doane University, Crete, NE
Installation Assistant, Senior Student Exhibition, Rall Gallery, Crete, NE
- 2019 Gallery Installation Assistant, Lauren Baird Exhibition, Rall Gallery, Crete, NE
Intern/Instructor's Assistant, LUX Center for the Arts, Lincoln, NE
Fellowship, winter term, LUX Center for the Arts, Lincoln, NE
Private Instructor, LUX Center for the Arts, Lincoln, NE
Teaching Assistant to Eric Stearns, 3D Design, Doane University, Crete, NE
- 2018 Gallery Installation Assistant, Eric Stearns Exhibition, Rall Gallery, Crete, NE

PERSONAL WORKSHOPS CONSTRUCTED

- 2023 Handbuilt Drinking Vessels, Ceramica Clay Club, Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS
- 2022 Holiday Sculpting, Ceramica Clay Club, FHSU, Hays, KS
Constructing Conceptual Ideas, Hoisington High School, Hoisington, KS
Sculpting The Figure, FHSU High School Art Day, Hays, KS
- 2021 Colby Pit Firing Workshop, Prairie Museum of Art and History, Colby, KS
Ceramica Clay Club: Clay Play, FHSU, Hays, KS
Functional Handbuilding, Ceramica Clay Club, FHSU, Hays, KS
Solid To Hollow: A Guide To Carving Solid Work, FHSU High School Art Day, Hays, KS
- 2020 Plaster Body Casting, Doane University, Crete, NE
Non-traditional Apparel, 3D Design, Doane University, Crete, NE
- 2019 Introductory Ceramics, ages 6-15, LUX Center for the Arts, Lincoln, NE
Animal Painting, LUX Center for the Arts, Lincoln, NE

WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

FHSU, Hays, KS

- 2023 Bambi Freeman, Speedball Underglaze Surfacing
Clayton Keyes, Figures and Flowers
Bede Clarke, Surfacing Workshop
- 2022 Joann Quinones and Jonathan Caballero, Figurative Symposium
Carolyn Mimbs, slip transfer workshop
- 2021 Nan Smith, studio visit
Marshall Maude, wood fire demonstration
Delvin Goode & John Hamilton III, Tiger Flow Workshop
Jamie Bates Slone, ceramic figurative sculpture workshop
Carol Guthro, print transfer workshop, Virtual Workshop
- 2020 Ted Neal, wood fire demonstration
Richard James, Figurative Ceramics workshop

RESUME

WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

OTHER LOCATIONS

- 2022 Andrea Keys Connell, Hollow Building a Bust: Head, Shoulders, Neck and Face, Virtual Workshop sponsored by Pocasin Arts
- 2019 Linda Ganstrom, Figure Perspective workshop, Doane University, Crete NE
Jessica Brandl, ceramics workshop, Doane University, Crete, NE
Heather Bryant, printmaking workshop, Doane University, Crete, NE
- 2018 Karen Kunc, printmaking workshop, Constellation Studios, Lincoln, NE
- 2017 Karen Kunc, printmaking workshop, Constellation Studios, Lincoln, NE
Matthew Cross, chiaroscuro workshop, Doane University, Crete, NE

PRESS

- 2022 The Book of Arts, Discover the Artist Media and Art Publications Network
- 2021 Composition 101: Photography, FHSU High School Art Day, Hays, KS
Lines Journal FHSU
- 2020 The Doane Owl

MEMBERSHIPS

- National Council on the Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA)
Fort Hays State University Honors Society
Ceramica Clay Club (C3)
Gender and Sexuality Alliance Club (GSE)
The Ceramic Arts Network
The Ceramic School
Nebraska Ceramic Artist Guild
American Institute of Graphic Arts Doane University (AIGA Doane)

CLASSES INSTRUCTED

- 2023 ART360: Throwing (Spring)
- 2022 ART260: Ceramics I (Fall)
ART260: Ceramics I (Spring)
ART460: Advanced Ceramics (Spring)
- 2021 ART260: Ceramics I (Fall)
- 2020 3-Dimensional Design (Spring)
- 2019 3-Dimensional Design (Fall)

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Thesis: Everything Changes, Nothing Dies.

Author: Olivia Shayle Stinson

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