

Somewhere between water, earth and fire exists the limitless potential of clay.

Plastic art forms, such as ceramics, or any art forms that involve manipulation, allow for both the honouring of age old forms as well as exploring the potential parameters of where the medium can and will go. By finding the limits and also recognizing the roots, artists are able to contribute to an endless legacy of discipline and departure. The archeological expanse, from time immemorial to present day, illustrates all manner of vessel and shard; the constituents of civilization and the creations and contributors of/to culture, in the same way figurative and architectural embellishment and abstract forms, from minute to massive scale, illustrate who people were and are.

The artists contributing to THROWN represent ceramics through a diversity of means and method, perspective and scale, and from across the geography of Canada. The reverence and offering of Robin DuPont's cups and stools; the impossible architecture of Jody Greenman-Barber's akin to kinetic sculptures that dance shadows on the wall; the figurative phantasm of Shary Boyle's silver polished study of perfectly articulated unease, John Kuroc's anthropomorphic burnished urn, the repose and human scale of Sergio Raffo's 'Absence'; and the ethereal, spatial disruption and augmentation of Samantha Dickie's 'Drop'. There is a vast distance travelled, if you follow the gaze and trajectory of every piece, intention, emotion, and the frozen fluidity of the work.

The physicality of ceramics is felt in the spaces both within and between these works, the pull and push and plasticity, the weight and balance of self-standing infrastructure, the risk of rise and fall, the whirl of centrifugal force. The privilege of medium-centric group exhibitions such as THROWN is that the viewer is given a gamut as apposed to a single perspective, a range or visual study of commonality, difference and divergence.

There is a somewhat unresolved relationship within many artistic disciplines and mediums, ceramics included, a sense that the divide between art and craft, expression and utility, is an insurmountable divide, a creative chasm uncrossed. This idea has been addressed within the THROWN exhibition by a diversity of expression and a recognition / erasure of the aforementioned divide. Robin DuPont's spine of stools down the center of the room, which in a very deliberate but symbolic sense, grounds the body of the exhibition to the room and each component part. There is a communion in this arrangement, an even ground where all forms are celebrated and connected. Curator Carol E. Mayer writes about the extraordinary exhibition 'Playing with Fire' that "...the artists defiantly and boldly challenge the notion that all things made of clay are required to be functional; in their works, clay is released from this constraint and elevated into extraordinary works of art." Rachel Gotlieb describes this as "releasing the medium from the tyranny of function" (Contemporary Ceramics, The Canadian Encyclopedia). And while there is truth in these statements there is equal truth in the celebration and perfection of form, the recognition of component parts that create the whole and the breaking free of the boundaries that constrain creativity.