

MA Student Statement of Intent

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(2nd draft: 16 November 2016)

My interest and strength lies with pattern making and surface decorating on clay. During my time on this MA I intend to develop a signature look that links all my new pottery pieces. Initially I will concentrate on developing sculptural pieces. I may then further extend the style developed here to a more commercial range of utilitarian ware, such as plates and bowls.

Sculptural Pieces

In my sketch pad I have been drawing a range of different creatures. I start off with making relative random patterns in watercolours, such as swirls and splodges. The less controlled, the better. From these patterns I try to distil some sort of forms and shapes and develop them into 'creatures' using black pen define them and add patterns. However, I deliberately try not to be too representational. The latter drawings are increasingly ambiguous as to what they represent.

These drawings will form the starting point for my sculptural pieces I hope to develop. I am planning to create a few large, possibly hand-built, pieces, which will be heavily decorated.

I intend to investigate what combination of decorating techniques will suit my work and hope by layering different techniques to create densely decorated surfaces. Currently, I am thinking of starting off with emulating my drawing process on paper by starting off with blotches of coloured slips on greenware. I can then pick up details with black underglaze paints and possibly adding enamels and lustres at the latter production stages.

I will have to look into finding the best suitable clays for me. They will have to be suitable for hand-building and have a white body suitable for my decorating purposes. I want to see whether there is a high-firing clay that will work and whether my underglazes will retain their brilliance at high temperatures.

In addition to using paints, I may want to look into adding other more textural surface decorating techniques, such as shellac resist.

As for the shape of my sculptures I prefer them to ambiguous maybe to the extent that there is no discernable no right way up or down. Maybe there is some scope of creating interlinking shapes that are pairs and form a narrative that way or can also stand alone. Possible theme for these: *Opposing Partners*: male/female, animated/static, rich/poor, eastern/western, light/dark, past/future, urban/rural....

In addition to a few larger hand-built pieces I will want to see whether I can't make some smaller figures using press moulds. I could use these moulds for making bit-parts, which can be assembled later and, thus, the opportunity to create variations on the finished shapes. Maybe, instead of making the models for the moulds out of clay I could shape them from a different material such as dense foam.

Research to be done:

- What is the best clay to use and at what temperature to fire
- Best hand-building techniques for large pieces
- Making models and press moulds
- Different surface decorating techniques, such as shellac, slips, enamels, lustres
- Assemble a library of patterns and also their meanings