

The Margins: A Non-Traditional Approach
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Ceramics is steeped in tradition. Whether a 15,000 year-old greenware bison from Le Tuc d'Audoubert, a Ming Dynasty vehicle for sustenance, or pure catalyst for an aesthetic experience, clay has held hands with society since its dawn. Tradition is dynamic, as not only does it change throughout time but perception of it does as well. Just as ceramic art has been marginalized, so have non-traditional approaches been marginalized by ceramists. Through this exhibition, *The Margins: A Non-Traditional Approach*, and a related panel discussion, we intend to use a pluralist approach to art practice to promote discourse about art for the sake of the individual piece regardless of the background of the maker or audience.

Today, ceramic art is simultaneously asserting why it is an ancient material with a vibrant tradition and dynamic living pulse, while the nature of its very versatility declares the necessity for it to no longer be referred to as Ceramic Art, but rather Art. Artists who use ceramic materials are becoming less and less background specific and self aware, and more about using the material for a specific reason. Artists are using ceramic materials in every way possible; dominant and supporting, fired and unfired, for utility and experience, as objects and installations, etc. Artists are still using clay for its archival and sanitary qualities, as historical lenses to summon content, and to access the fragility of Meissen porcelain and the strength of the Rapp Brother's Brick Company among other things. As Art in general is making a shift away from maker-specific material identity toward work-specific material identity, clay is now just another material akin to paint or bronze, polyurethane or plywood, a digital image, light, sound, scent, or the human body. Clay is just another material used by artists to make art.

The artists presented in *The Margins* are such that reduce elements to their necessity. Clay is a dominant element that runs through all of the work without existing as such from a viewpoint of physical or conceptual mass, but rather whether or not it is affectively used to realize the maker's intention.

The Margins will use the notion of a historically non-traditional approach to a tradition-laden medium as a point of departure from which installation, performance, and mixed media work will have as much of a voice as more traditional forms have had for generations. We aim to curate an exhibition that highlights artists who are making work that is unfettered by genre specificity and in favor of an approach that is intended to be seen for its own merit within the tradition of Art, and not necessarily judged within the scope of a Ceramic-specific tradition.