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Spring 3-2021

### Slowly but Surely

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SLOWLY BUT SURELY

by

Katie Bosley

A THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of  
The Graduate College at the University of Nebraska  
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements  
For the Degree of Master of Fine Arts

Major: Art

Under the Supervision of Professor Pete Pinnell

Lincoln, Nebraska

March, 2021

# SLOWLY BUT SURELY

Katie Bosley, M.F.A

University of Nebraska, 2021

Adviser: Peter Pinnell

I craft porcelain vessels that combine dynamic forms and dimensional surfaces to create a captivating presence. Formal components such as line, space, and color are carefully considered to create objects that are striking at first glance and reward further inspection. Constructed with an emphasis on structure, these works challenge conventional interpretations of the vessel and promote a sense of awe.

My vessels are relational objects that both affect and are affected by their surroundings. Employing positive and negative space, and light and shadow, they collaborate with the space they inhabit. They are objects designed to promote and reward active viewing. With an interior volume to peer into or through, and interplay between layered features, the vessel is used to promote curiosity and invite the viewer in closer than they might engage with other art objects. When observed from different viewpoints they offer a shifting understanding of form, volume, and symmetry. Creating inventive interpretations of the vessel form, I utilize the familiar to present the unexpected.

The works exhibited in *Slowly but Surely* are created with careful curation of formal elements throughout the making process. The specific proportions within each piece are calculated to contribute to a sense of volume. Patterns created by repetition of dimensional elements creates visual movement around or across each piece. Form and structure are influenced by a range of architectural styles, including Gothic, Islamic, modern, and postmodern. Moments in architecture such as the inviting quality of repeated

arches down a corridor or a dynamic roofline contrasting against the sky are combined with the language of the vessel in these objects. Inspiration for surface designs comes from patterns I find captivating. This can include anything from dimensional folded paper or carved stone that shift with changing light to the vibration of patterns in Islamic tile work.

In both form and surface, symmetry is ever present in my work. Satisfying order and patterns are used to entice and mesmerize viewers. Precise repetition is also employed as a mark of intention; little or nothing is left to chance. The medium is controlled; all marks are deliberate. In the case of recurring elements, such as the supports in *Pierced Supports*, repetition brings attention to their role as not only decorative, but integral structural components that come together to make a striking whole. Like the repeated rib vault simultaneously supporting and ornamenting the ceiling of a gothic cathedral, this use of repetition speaks to the architectural approach I bring to constructing vessels.

Scale is carefully considered in my vessels to promote active engagement. Larger works, such as *Nave Triptych*, may be viewed from farther away and require more movement around the piece, while smaller pieces, such as *Draped Line*, pull one in closer. Along with scale, the orientation of symmetrical designs shifts to be best viewed from the side or from above, urging the viewer to approach each unique vessel in a slightly different way.

Achromatic surfaces on my forms heighten dynamic play with light and shadow. White glazes allow pierced portions of vessels to contrast starkly with darker interior volumes, as seen in *Lattice Series*. On forms such as *Rhythmic Pillars*, the neutral color

combines with light and shadow to bring dimensional patterned designs to life. On quieter forms, such as *Contoured Planes*, subtlety is celebrated as light falls across the different contours and faces or reflects differently on satin or shiny glaze variations. White surfaces also contribute to the relational quality of these vessels, allowing my pieces to transform along with the natural light or mood of the room as time passes.

I have always valued skillfully handcrafted objects for the immense time and effort poured into the making process. I imbue the vessels I make with value by constructing and finishing them with great attention to detail. Carefully repeated pierced patterns and hand-carved components communicate my care for the object, asking the viewer for the same care in return.

I work with clay because as a malleable material that responds readily to the hand, it can be formed into anything imaginable. With the freedom to manipulate every detail, I see clay as a material that emphasizes my intentional making. Porcelain in particular provides a pristine surface that can be shaped, carved, and smoothed to create a polished finish that contributes to the understanding of my vessels as objects meant for display. I also use clay because it is a material historically associated with the vessel, and as such, rooted in intimate and active interaction.

The works in *Slowly but Surely* are a collection of vessels with engaging presence. These are objects meant to be gradually and carefully observed and appreciated, paralleling my relationship with these vessels during the making process. Laboring through the development and creation of this body of work has happened slowly, but surely.



*Nave Triptych*  
Porcelain, Poplar, and India Ink  
23.5" x 10" x 12.5"





*Pierced Brick*  
porcelain  
14" x 6" x 10"

*Draped Line*  
porcelain  
8" x 5.5" x 4"







*Pierced Supports*  
porcelain  
10" x 10" x 4.5"

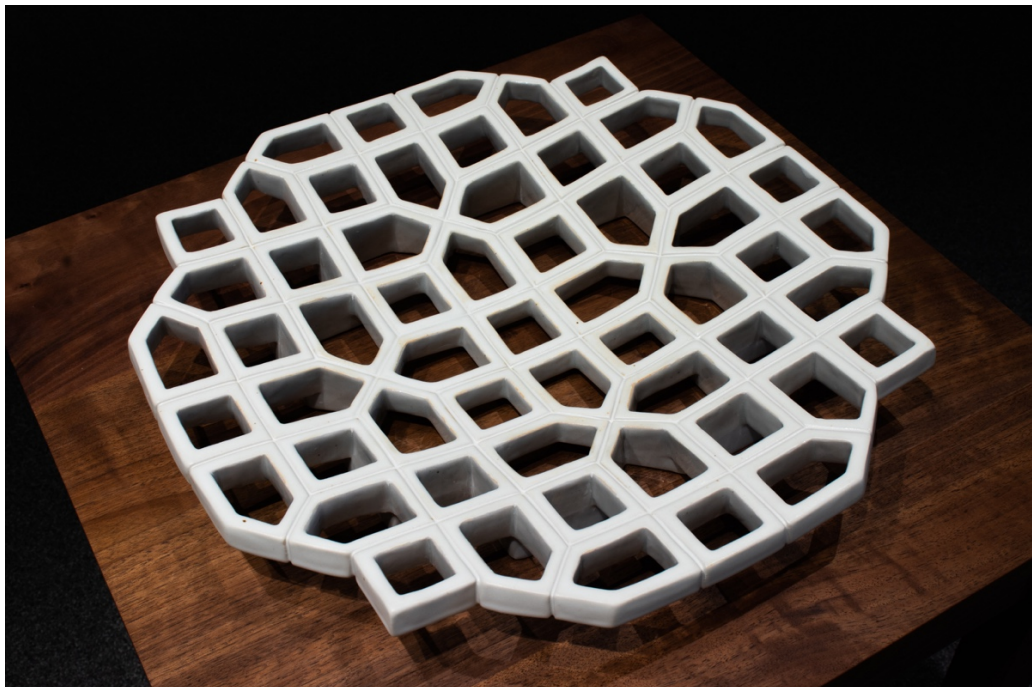


*Lattice Series*  
porcelain  
40" x 5" x 12.5"





*Rhythmic Pillars*  
porcelain  
18" x 10" x 14"



*Tiled Curve*  
porcelain  
14.5" x 14.5 x 2.5



*Contoured Planes*  
porcelain  
22" x 6" x 9.5"



Pedestals for this project were made possible, in part, with support from the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Hixson-Lied College of Fine and Performing Arts' Endowment Fund.