

BY WILLIAM LEE

# Anomaly

SELECTED WORKS

2020-2023

## Artist Statement

Seeking growth in my knowledge and skills as a ceramic artist, I approach my work by thoroughly analyzing the process of making as I work towards a deeper understanding of how ceramics works. I have a passion for the challenge and complexity of slip casting and mould making. When considering the surface and glazes, the balance between decoration and function presents another challenge in the process, allowing me a continuous opportunity to grow and develop new ways to explore the process of making. Pairing my interests in slip casting and glaze research; with my love of food, I create organic forms that elevate and present food in an exciting way. Breaking from the restrictions of traditional dinnerware, I delve into the nature-inspired voluminous forms that have become the main theme of my current body of work.

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## **Creative Process**

In order to creativity in my practice, there needs to be constants and variables. Without the constants to keep my thought process grounded, there would be an overwhelming number of solutions due to the proliferation of ideas born from an excessive amount of variables.

Constants and variables in my body of work are broken into 2 groups, technical, and conceptual.

### **Technical Constants:**

Firing - Cone 6  
method - slip casting  
Clay - white porcelain casting slip

### **Technical Variables:**

Glaze finish - various textures and colours

### **Conceptual Constants:**

Inspiration - nature  
Function - dinnerware

### **Conceptual Variables:**

Specific shapes, forms, and sizes

# Glaze Research

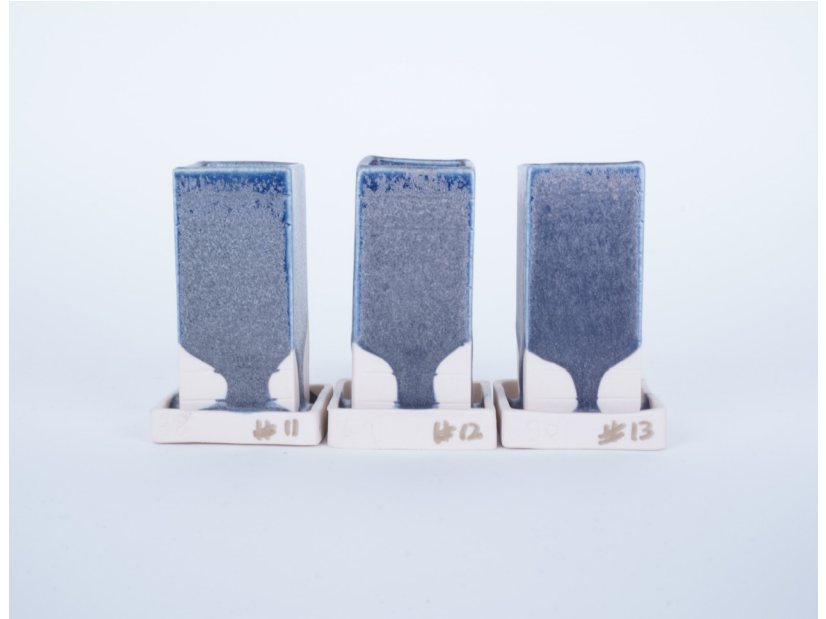
**A series a tests was conducted to control the surface crystal development of a micro crystal glaze.**

*Summary:*

The main issue of this glaze lies in the overdevelopment of the crystals on the surface. This causes the surface to be completely matte with the glossy blue background completely covered. In order the the reduce the amount of crystal on the surface, the kiln would need to cool down quickly. However, due to the natural slow cooling of a large kiln, this issue will have to be resolved chemically.

The main oxide that creates crystals is magnesium, therefore by reducing it gradually through a series of tests, we are able to pin point the exact amount of magnesium needed for the glaze to develop just the right amount of crystals without completely covering the blue background.

It was through this series of tests that we were able to discover a new glaze with a deep blue variegation that is crystal free.



**Figure 2**



**Figure 3**



Figure 4

## More Glaze Research

### A series of test with different colourants.

*Summary:*

This series of tests is done with a different recipe from the previous test. This recipe also contains magnesium as the main crystal forming oxide. All the different colours of these glazes were created by using various amounts of colouring oxides as well as stains. I chose to use the recipes that utilized oxide rather than stains as it provided the crystals with a more interesting colouration.



Figure 5

## Clouds - Previous Work

**A series of dinnerware born from my love of food and clouds.**

*Summary:*

My previous restrictions from working on the wheel, had always kept my work round and uninspiring. This series of cloud plates and bowls was my first step to creative freedom, where the work no longer needed to be round, stacked neatly, or flat. It presented a whole new way of making that pushed me forward into a whole new unknown territory.

In order to mimic the soft curves of clouds, the original model of these slip-casted wares were sculpted by pressing slabs of clay onto round bisque forms of various sizes. A plaster mould was created from the model which is then used to slip-cast these hollow forms.

**CONCEPTUAL CONSTANT:**  
Clouds

**CONCEPTUAL VARIABLE:**  
Shapes, forms, and sizes



# Rocks - Previous Work

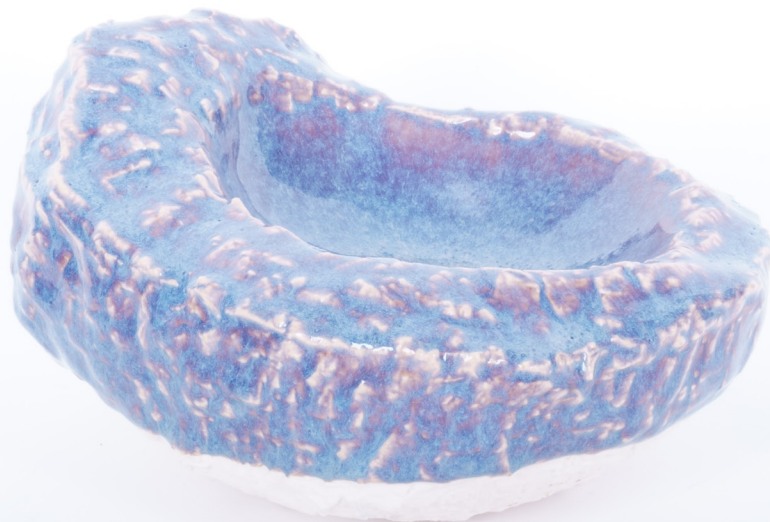
**A bowl made to resemble the shape and textures of a rock.**

*Summary:*

My next concept was a bowl made to look as if a solid rock had its surface scooped out leaving behind a crevice that could be used to serve liquids. The major technical challenge was to create a rock like texture that felt natural and random. This was accomplished by first sculpting a smooth clay model, and instead of creating the textures in the model, it was chiselled directly into the plaster mould itself.

**CONCEPTUAL CONSTANT:**  
Rocks

**CONCEPTUAL VARIABLE:**  
Shapes, forms, and sizes



**Figure 6**

## **"Anomaly"**

**I have always had difficulty fitting into where ever I go as an immigrant child, I'm no longer Chinese enough to be Chinese, but I'm not Canadian enough to be Canadian. I'm not realistic enough to pursue a standard 9 to 5 career, nor do I feel artistic enough to be an artist. I've always felt like an "Anomaly", just like my body of work. As I'm unable to put a name to what I've created.**

**The initial idea of Anomaly was the lack of a concrete idea. I struggled to make a decision on how to move forward and I realized just how stressful it was to restrict myself to have it planned out with a specific inspiration before I started making.**

**So instead, I just starting making. I didn't have a plan. I didnt have any conceptual inspirations. I just allowed my hands and my creative intuition take charge.**



Figure 7



Figure 8

## Small Bowls

**A series of small bowls designed to hold Korean side dishes.**

*Summary:*

My love of Korean food led me to create this series of bowls designed to contain a table full of Korean side dishes. Korean side dishes or "Ban Chan" has always been my favourite part of a Korean meal and can often be overlooked by many. These bowls can elevate the Ban Chan to display it as an valued part of a meal.

At this point of my making process, I wanted to be even more free creatively, so I did not look to nature specifically for inspiration. Instead, I allowed myself to freely sculpt with a block of clay into whatever form felt natural to my hands.

**CONCEPTUAL CONSTANT:**  
Small Bowl for side dishes

**CONCEPTUAL VARIABLE:**  
Form Inspiration



Figure 9

## Medium Plates

**Multi-use plates that can be used for a variety of functions.**

*Summary:*

By leaving the design inspiration completely up to my hands and subconscious, this series of wares were craft with ridges embedded all around its walls. In order to create a functional plate, to top is carved out to create a wide crevice that can hold a wider variety of foods.

**CONCEPTUAL CONSTANT:**  
Medium sized plate

**CONCEPTUAL VARIABLE:**  
Form Inspiration



Figure 10

## Tumblers

**The more I look at it, the more it looks like softserve ice cream.**

*Summary:*

Cups and mugs were always a staple in my practice. But for a couple of years I have unknowingly moved away from drinking vessels as I explored various different forms. Coming back to it this time without an inspiration in mind had subconsciously drawn out my deep love for soft serve ice cream.

**CONCEPTUAL CONSTANT:**

Small tumbler for drinks

**CONCEPTUAL VARIABLE:**

Form Inspiration



Figure 11







Figure 13

## Large Bowls

**There is no such thing as a bowl that's too big.**

*Summary:*

As I grew up, the bowls I ate out of never stopped growing. I love eating out of a large bowl, and I love eating out of a large bowl I made myself even more. Of all the pieces in this series, the general form of this bowl is the most conventional. It is round and deep. It reflects on what I'm most comfortable with using, but at the same time elevates the food it contains with the volume of the bowl itself. A path in the arts. This sense of not belonging has led me to feel like an "Anomaly", a term which is also fitting for the body of work I have created.

**CONCEPTUAL CONSTANT:**

Large bowl

**CONCEPTUAL VARIABLE:**

Form Inspiration

**No matter how hard I try to control all the factors, how many tests I do before settling on a glaze, there will always be surprises. A glaze that's always been brown/dark purple, can suddenly get crystals seeded from the tiniest amount of cobalt.**

**This presents yet another opportunity to learn and discover new ways to manipulate a glaze. The neverending pursuit of my knowledge in glaze chemistry will keep me motivated to continue my research and development for years to come.**

**"Anomaly" is still just the beginning. As much as I like to organize factors in logical ways, the most illogical choices always seems push my work forward into directions that excite my passion for ceramics.**



Figure 14

CERAMICIST

# William Lee

**William Lee moved to Scarborough Ontario from Hong Kong at 7 years old with his family. He's always had an interest in crafts and began learning wheel throwing in May of 2013. William wishes to create dinnerware that pushes the boundaries of traditional designs by creating work with a variety of glazes and forms.**



Figure 15

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# Appendix

**Figure 1 Dinnerware set, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 2 Test tiles, William Lee, 2020**

**Figure 3 Test tiles, William Lee, 2020**

**Figure 4 Test tiles, William Lee, 2020**

**Figure 5 Cloud dinnerware set, William Lee, 2020**

**Figure 6 Rock bowl, William Lee, 2020**

**Figure 7 Large bowl, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 8 Small bowls, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 9 Medium plates, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 10 Tumblers, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 11 Medium plates, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 12 Dinnerware set, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 13 Large bowl, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 14 Large bowl and tumbler, William Lee, 2023**

**Figure 15 Artist photo, William Lee, 2018**

